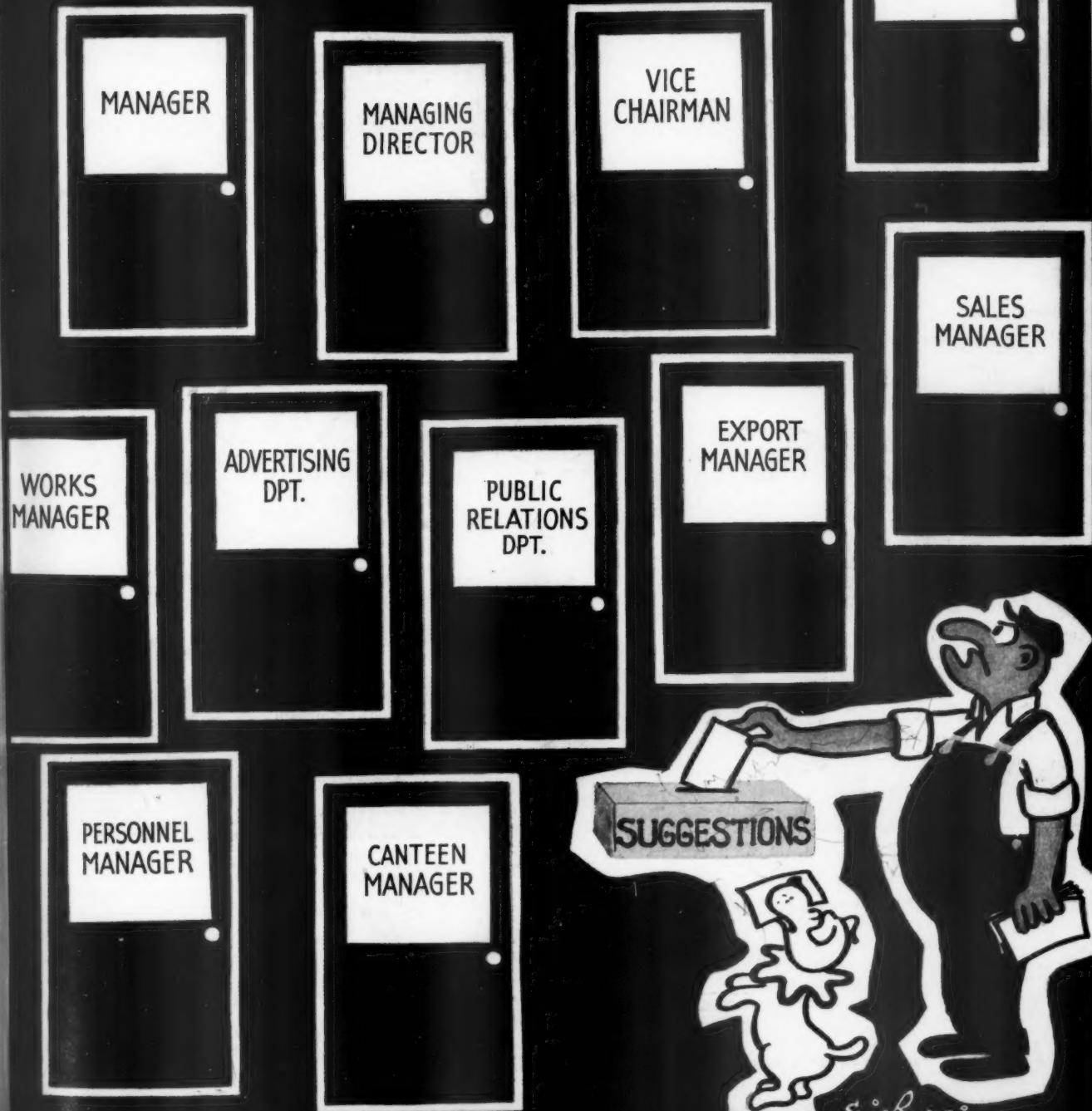


Punch

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PUNCH

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Bernard Hollowood



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*For overseas rates see page 724

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The London Charivari

SUGGESTIONS that America's new President, once in the saddle, will take "a tougher line" with Russia must be regarded as a warning to sub-editors the world over. Caution with headlines will be essential if we're to know at a glance which Mr. K. is rapping which.

No Redress

SOME sympathy must be felt for that Newcastle-upon-Tyne viewer, now doing three months for stealing three pounds odd from the meter of his hired television set. The magistrate said unfeeling that the man had simply "regarded the meter as a money-box," and that may be. But might not



the benefit of the doubt have been given? How many of us, given some way of getting our money back after a more than usually deplorable programme, would find temptation easy to resist? A friend of mine, who no doubt exaggerates, tells of a case where an angry renter broke open the meter after *M Squad* and found it full of dollars and cents.

Preening for Stardom

"HARD Cash—Trophies—Prestige—and perhaps Stardom—for Birds Who Can Talk!" The announce-

ment from the organizers of the National Exhibition of Cage Birds was enough to thrill any budgerigar, parrot, cockatoo, cockatiel, mynah, "or even," it was kindly suggested, "a canary." Every bird who was a good talker would



be given a chance to display his prowess before the general public, the radio microphone and the television cameras, the press officer said. Owners of birds who suffer from speech impediments or other inhibitions, such as modesty, should keep their pets at home and take care at the right moment to put covers over their television sets.

Cup Dashed from Lip

DISAPPOINTMENT now joins dirt and danger as a bonus-earner. Because they preferred to watch football rather than finish unloading a ship, Manchester dockers claimed as "disappointment money" the wages paid to another gang who did the job. There was a sort of parallel unearned income claim a few years ago by some newspaper workers who were idle, though not on strike, during a stoppage and therefore demanded extra money for the Bank Holiday they did not work. Professional musicians, a down-trodden lot, have been meekly content



HOLLOWARD

"Kennedy's immature, Macmillan's immature, De Gaulle's immature, Adenauer's immature—and I don't go for immature men, Mr. Morrissey."

all these years to bite their nails whenever they get a few bars' rest during Schubert's Unfinished Symphony and fret over what the last movement would have had in it for them.

Needle Match

PROFESSIONAL footballers, denied an increase in their £20 a week maximum, are in a weak position. If they strike they forfeit the new tenguinea plum for appearing in a televised match and if they go slow or work to rule in passing, tackling or shooting they risk suspicion of bribery to sell the game. Announcing the decision the President of the Football League said "It is no good in football if people cannot accept defeat." It seems rather a lot to expect a disgruntled reserve half-back to say "A good, clean game, and on the run of the play the League deserved to win."

The Case Against Recognition

EVERY time I feel a flicker of hope for the development of trade between China and the West along comes someone like Commander Anthony Courtney, M.P., with a first-hand report indicating that the people behind the bamboo curtain just don't know what sort of stuff we want. Commander Courtney was given a Chinese catalogue in English offering

tins of Shanghai Frog Fat ("properly sweetened and without unpalatable smell") and White Fungus Soup ("a reliable expectorant . . . eradicates spots"). A rival Tientsin firm's advertisement for Yin Chiao "Poison Relieving Tablets" was not sufficiently reassuring, and as far as I'm concerned Chinese cookery is suspect east of Tower Bridge.

Let Nothing You Dismay

THE season of goodwill got away to an early start in St. Pancras where police were called in to deal with two hundred scuffling university students some of whom had been jumping the queue for Christmas vacation jobs.

Links with Literature

AN advertiser is asking £500 for Rudyard Kipling's Rolls-Royce (1928 model), which is probably more than anyone got for Milton's bed or Gibbon's bathtub. What next, I wonder? There are one or two islands round these coasts which could be described as "once owned by Sir Compton Mackenzie," doubtless to their financial advantage. But is posterity going to pay through the nose for Terence Rattigan's deep-freeze, or Colin Wilson's sleeping-bag? It would be fun to see an advertisement beginning, "Footman, delivered by Somerset Maugham, seeks post . . ." After all, the G.O.M., as a student at St. Thomas's, did attend sixty-three confinements in three weeks.



Art Editor

RUSSELL BROCKBANK, who has been Art Editor of *Punch* for twelve years, is resigning at the end of the year. He will be succeeded by William Hewison. Students of Brockbank's masterly pictorial satirical comment on the world of transport will be relieved to know that his retirement will enable him to appear more frequently in *Punch's* pages. He is of course a member of the *Punch* Table.

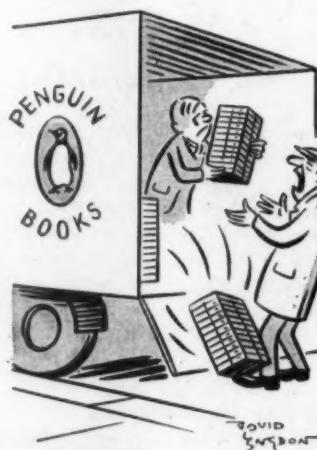
Problem Country

WE are so used to thinking of Russia as a vast, impassive machine, a solid phalanx of comrades moving as one man towards their ends, that it comes as a shock to hear of the trouble they've been having revaluing the rouble. All they want to do is knock a nought off it—to make one new rouble worth ten old ones. What happens? Immediately the Azerbaijanis start hoarding old roubles, under the impression that one day they'll be worth ten times their present value. Patient explanations take place in difficult Persian dialects. Next moment the Lapps (they're a bit slower up north, but even more obstinate) have had exactly the same idea, and the whole thing has to be gone through again in Lapp. Considering the ease with which France, a notoriously ramshackle country, knocked two noughts off the franc, I find this oddly comforting.

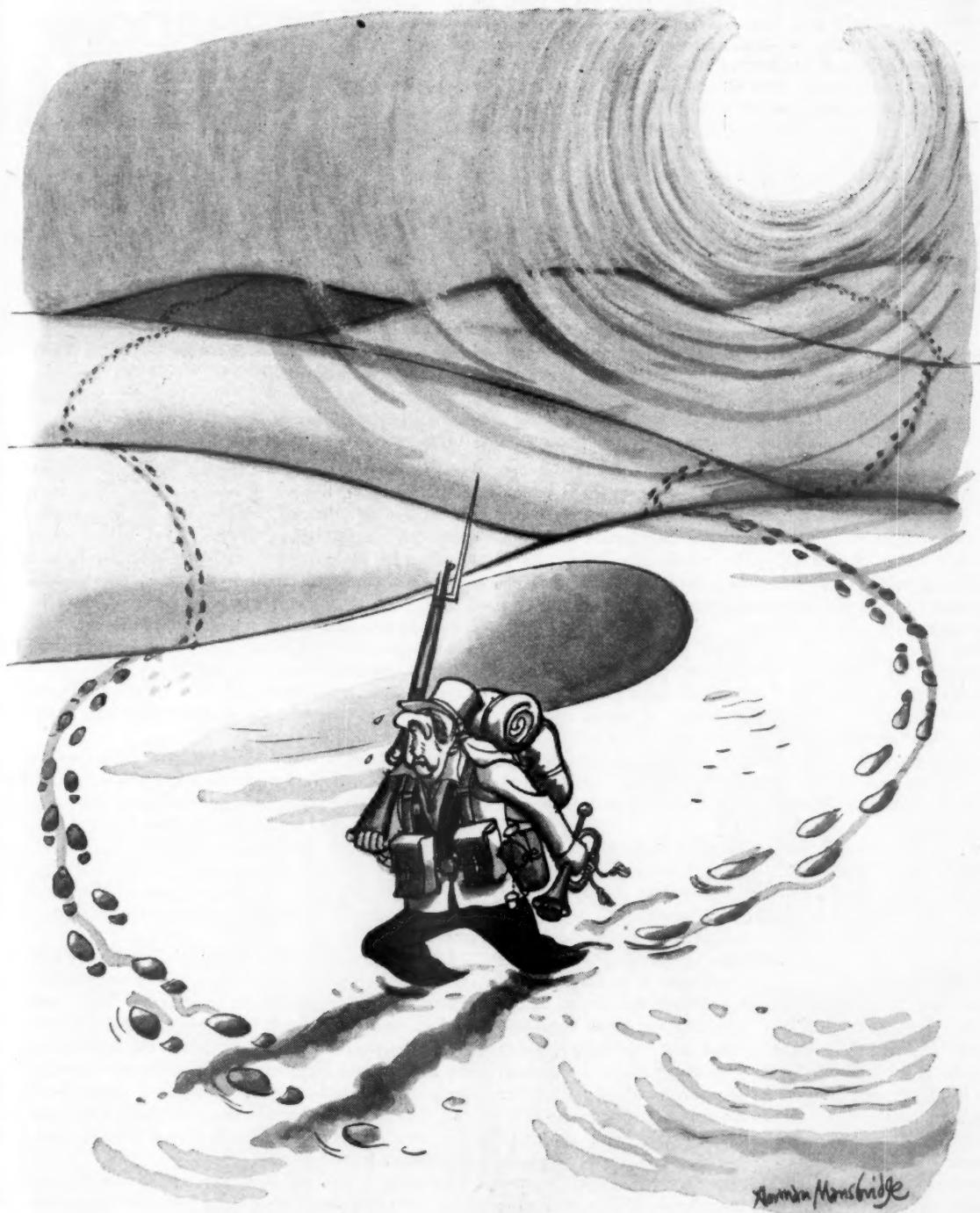
Mon Dieu, Quelle Situation

ANYONE looking down, as I was recently, from the top of a bus approaching Charing Cross Station from the East, may be given pause, as I was, if he happens to see one of the placards on the pavement later than the others. The others are newsvendors' bills, with the usual scrawled messages of doom and disaster and fatuity from all over the world. This one, just the same size, propped at the same angle, is painted—an all-weather job; but seeing it there one automatically reads its boldly-lettered announcement as a headline. It says "Chemist in Arcade."

— MR. PUNCH



***!*



EN ALGÉRIE

Began motor racing in 1946 at 17; British National Champion in 1950, 1951, 1952, 1954, 1955, 1956 and 1957; first Englishman to win the Mille Miglia, in 1955. Director of Beefburger and Express Coachcraft and Managing Director of company that bears his name. Recreations: judo, water-skiing, dancing, spear-fishing, aviation, model-making, theatre

STIRLING MOSS

6

Minister of Transport



IF I were Minister of Transport I would try to develop Britain's transportation system from the point at which the Romans were so rudely interrupted. Nothing seems to have gone right on our roads since they left. Chesterton sounded quite pleased when he wrote that "the rolling English drunkard made the rolling English road," but I do not think this fact is anything to brag about. There must be a better way. I am sure there is.

But before attempting to do the job properly I would undertake an important preliminary preparation. I am assuming that by this time I would have been judged capable of driving a car again in public places. I would insist on taking the Prime Minister on a motor tour of the British Isles. Whether we went in a sports car or a family saloon, and however meticulously I observed the highway code and all the local road signs, I am confident that the experience would terrify him.

We would certainly start by leaving London via the so-called "Great" North Road, because I would want to ensure that he had plenty of opportunities to look closely at giant lorries approaching head-on at high speed along the centre lane of one of our principal three-lane arterial roads. And the tour would end, with luck, by coming into London via the so-called "Great" West Road, because I would want to ensure that he observed the absurdity of the timing of the traffic lights there and the resultant impotent rage and suicidal acceleration and deceleration and convulsive weaving of some of our typical over-tired Sunday drivers. In between the beginning and the end of the tour it would not matter much where we went; on almost any route there would be plenty of semi-paralysed industrial cities and congested market towns and villages through which heavy traffic passes about as easily as a steel hawser through a petit-point embroidery needle. (Perhaps I should make it clear, before the British Travel and Holidays Association gets upset, that I am not against villages. I love villages. I am only against main roads in villages.)

Of course I do not know as yet who my passenger might be. I am not talking about any particular Prime Minister.

I am speculating about a hypothetical Prime Minister. But of one thing, I believe, I can be fairly sure, in view of the weakening effect of politics and the appearance of the prospective candidates of all the parties before us: whoever he might be, my passenger would probably not be an athlete.

When it comes to motoring fast, as I pointed out in my book,* "To retain your prowess, there is one very prime essential; you must keep yourself absolutely fit." With all due respect I must say that this hypothetical Prime Minister would probably be just a bit below the peak of physical fitness even before our tour. His condition afterwards might help me to alter for the better the course of British transportation.

Unless I badly overrate my capacity for endurance, I doubt that by the time we finished our cruise around Britain I would feel any more exhausted than at the end of the 1955 Mille Miglia, unless we happened to go on a Bank Holiday. Anyway, the ordeal would be well worth while, because by the time we got back to 10 Downing Street the Prime Minister, I predict, would be emotionally ready to acknowledge that our roads could do with some improvement.

Immediately, without a moment's rest, we would hurry into the Cabinet Room where, by prearrangement, my fellow Ministers would be in attendance. This would be a vital meeting, for it would be at this time that I would present my arguments for giving my Ministry top priority in sharing the Budget, and for giving the Minister of Transport really dictatorial power to get his work done. Some people have said that Mr. Marples was given virtually dictatorial power over local authorities. Virtually is not enough—and I want power over John Betjeman as well.

Like the Prime Minister, the rest of the Cabinet would have been prepared by shocking personal experience. As a required condition for my acceptance of my portfolio they would just have concluded a full day of driving themselves around London in large limousines. They would have been obliged to drive from Hyde Park Corner to the Bank of

* *In the Track of Speed.* Muller, 15/-

England and Lloyds during the morning rush hour, to try to park in Mayfair at midday, and to drive back to Whitehall late in the afternoon by way of Marble Arch, Wapping Old Stairs, Little Venice and Cricklewood. It is not that I am a sadist; I would just want them to face the facts.

With their brains in a receptive pulpy state I would appeal to their reason. What is the use of spending so much money on housing and education, I would ask, if it is unsafe to travel between home and school? Could the defence budget not be pared down without much difficulty? Just a few thousands of tons of potential thermonuclear explosive power here and there would hardly appreciably weaken our deterrent, but a few hundred million pounds would build great stretches of dual carriageways, bridges and clover leaves.

If generalities failed to impress them sufficiently I would attack with statistics. I would point out that in England and Wales *combined* on March 31, 1958, the total mileage of trunk, Class I, Class II, Class III and unclassified public highways was 163,297. That figure includes 85,823 miles of unclassified highways—over 50 per cent of the former figure. You would think they could be classified at least. Then I would point out that on March 31 last year the

comparable total mileage had increased to 164,318. I would call their attention to the fact that the increase was only 1,021 miles of highways. Then I would tell them that the total number of vehicles licensed was 6,881,000 in 1957 and 7,317,000 in 1958. The latter total includes 29,000 trench diggers, mobile cranes, mowing machines, etc., and 467 trams. The time-spans are dissimilar and the units of measurement are unlike, but the *proportionate* increases are very striking indeed. Yet the expenditure on roads and bridges went up from £121,647,000 in the year 1957-1958 to £148,569,000 in the year 1958-1959—an increase of only £26,922,000. I would invite my colleagues to do some arithmetic and consider the density of vehicles per road-mile in terms of enlarging percentages and frequency of mudguard dents. If they could not readily compute these basic inter-relationships I would congratulate them on having an expert in charge who would allow them to relax until the next general election. Finally, if any resistance remained to be overcome, I would recite traffic census analytical tables.

Support having been mobilized, I would be able to outline some of the features of my programme.

Ordering everybody off the roads would undoubtedly



"I'll have you know that this is a respectable hotel."

help; but I realize that many constituents would regard such a reform as too idealistic. Therefore, my idea would be to clear the roads of only those people who are incompetent to drive. Stiffer tests would be introduced. Any reasonably skilful driver should be able to get through the test given by the Institute of Advanced Motorists—and without a lot of arm-wagging and answering silly catch-questions.

Quick reflexes are good things to have when you are driving, but they are not nearly so important as ordinary intelligence. If I were Minister of Transport there would be no dunces on the roads. Some drivers to-day cannot even estimate the width of their own cars.

At all costs, by raising licence fees and petrol taxes, if necessary, I would build a national grid of M1-type highways, all connected up decently with underpasses and fly-overs. But, unlike M1, they would not stop in the middle of nowhere; they would connect with urban ring roads and penetrate right into city centres. Between the verticals and horizontals of the grid the rural nature of the countryside would be carefully preserved; I do not want to spoil the English country lane. With commercial traffic confined to the main roads the pleasure would return to recreational motoring.

Highway construction would be pushed hard, ruthlessly, twenty-four hours a day, and the opening of new sections of road would never be delayed for the sake of getting some V.I.P. to cut a silk ribbon.

As for the parking problem, I would see that nobody got permission to put up an urban building unless it contained sufficient parking space for everybody who would use the building. This could be done fairly economically in most cases by the construction of underground car-parks. I would also encourage the manufacture of smaller cars by taxing vehicles according to the space they took up, with a large,

steeply graduated differential to make big cars a really major luxury.

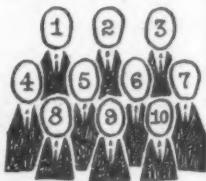
I do not like forcing people to design cars a certain way or to drive them a certain way. The greatest thing in life is individual freedom. I am against the Aldermaston marchers, the Ramblers' Association, and the Lord's Day Observance Society. I would not compel people to equip cars with safety belts or backward-facing seats for passengers, although some deaths and injuries might be saved like that. But I would be very tough on people with faulty lights and indicators, and, having posted legible, explicit signs, I would make sure that everybody observed appropriate maximum speed limits in built-up areas and *minimum* speed limits in certain fast lanes between towns.

I would encourage the police to pull people in for driving dangerously, but I would eliminate the sort of radar ambush that traps drivers above to-day's arbitrary speed limits on clear roads. People who objected to driving at a reasonably high speed on the main roads would be advised to travel by air and rail. I usually do so myself. To make the railways a bit more attractive I would speed up their electrification, and I might introduce a few glamorous super-trains. I think it would be nice to have trains with special compartments for the exhibition of movies, and American-style lounge cars, and cars with shower-baths.

The more I think about minimum speed limits the more determined I am to get things rolling. I do not think I will announce at this time just how fast the minimum will be or where it will be imposed. I shall save that for a surprise.

Other portfolios will be offered to:

- (7) **A. P. H.**
Home Secretary
- (8) **ARNOLD WESKER**
Minister of Housing
- (9) **GWYN THOMAS**
Chancellor of the Exchequer
- (10) **NIGEL KNEALE**
Minister of Power



"You need a haircut."

Effort of Memory

SOMEONE said something lately which did not
At first strike me as odd—yet on reflection
It did, though who the speaker was and what
It was he said escapes my recollection.
Could it have been Yehudi Menuhin,
Paul Beard, or possibly Max Jaffa who
Remarked "Before I play the violin
I always dip my hands in liquid glue"?
Or was it Brabham, possibly, who stated
"I drive the fastest when I keep the brakes on"?
Or Philip Harben who asseverated
"A chunk of ice is best for frying steaks on"?
I've got it now! It was a politician
Demanding an effective Opposition.

— E. V. MILNER



OVER the shop my big, fat Uncle Frank
(Frank GROCER Harrap, as the fascia said)
Played the harmonium, with *Traumerei*,
The Broken Melody and *Edelweiss*,
His pipe-ash flaking on the yellow keys,
Jets d'Eau (by Sydney Smith). He sometimes sang
"When Father Laid the Carpet on the Stairs,"
But this, his comic song, would make me cry,
Thinking of Father, gone so long before
To carpetless last rest. "Music for you,
My Boy," my Uncle said.

But down below,
Behind the mahogany counter's stalwart sheen
I wandered in an acrid, secret land
Where scent of fresh-sliced ham married with soap
And Robin Starch and turpentine and cheese.
For I must be a grocer. Auntie Beth,
Short, brisk, tone-deaf, no nonsense, shrewd with scales,
Knew this, and weighing broken biscuits out,
Precise, square-fingered, blackly bodiced, boned,
Was on my side. "Pass me the Drummer Dye,
And here's the string, now make a tidy parcel."
Above us, Uncle boomed a double chant,
Pulled out the Tuba, nobly swelled the bass,
"He's off again," she said.

Ah, Worksop, Notts!
I see thy wet streets still: sharp off the Bridge
A sign said DANCER (DANGER, but the G
Was chipped). Beyond, the grey Infirmary,
Where Uncle organed hymns on Sunday nights.
I feel the hand-smooth oaken handle yet,
Too big, when first I pumped the harmless wind
That Uncle at the keyboard turned to din,
While reedy vagrants sang. Would they, like me,
Have rather had an Oxo-cube or two
Than "Brightly Gleams our Banner"? Was I wrong,
When Uncle's "Onward Christians" wheezed aloft,
To think of H.P. Sauce and Quaker Oats,
Snug-packaged sausages, or marmalade
Perky with gollywogs in neat-ranged jars?
I ached to get my little apron on
And be a grocer. "Pound of lard? Obliged
To you, Miss Welkin. Margarine? Of course.
Oh, yes, the Kaiser can't last long, I'm sure,
Over by Christmas."

Christmas was the time

My Uncle pressed the music on me most.
"Come boy, one finger, 'Hark the Heralds' now!"
He never knew that music soured my dreams.

* * *

And then came school. My ruddy Uncle Frank, Sonorous-humming "Rule, Britannia!" walked Me there on my first day, then changed his tune To "Down Among the Dead Men." Teacher smiled To hear that I should learn the violin.
"He'll play to us in Sheffield Town Hall yet," My Uncle said, "or I'll be much surprised."
Surprised he was. I never played, except At grocers. My young head was bright and sharp With images of ginger-nuts in tins,
The holy cleanliness of string-cut cheese Whose fumes, astringent in my nose's mind, Filled all my days at school.

One day (in March
Of 1922) quick-scampering home,
I found my Auntie weeping at the till.
"He'll have to stop his music now," she said,
Mopping with butter-muslin at her sniffs,
"I can't keep on alone, with times so bad,
Not now that wicked Co-Op's started up
Across the street."

Was this my earliest brush
With grief? I think my little grocer's heart
Grew up just then, knowing that days gone by,
Safe, in a world of pies and potted meat,
Sugar's harsh granulations underfoot,
Fly-papers hanging, Golden Syrups piled,
(And *Edelweiss* down-twining) were no more.

* * *

They buried Auntie. Customers sent flowers.
We creaked in Mr. Henshaw's taxi home.
The leaf-green shop blinds (one a little cracked
To make, as it had always seemed, the shape
Of tied string, hanging, waiting for the snip
Of scissors), masked the mourning windows off.
Oh, little place! I deeply loved thee then.
And thought "Now, surely now, must Uncle Frank
Need me, beladdered to a topmost shelf,
To reach the Sarson's Vinegar, the yeast;
Wrap candles, measure cocoa, hand the change!
I'll be a grocer now!"

"Your Aunt," he said,
Heaving his sorrow up the narrow stair,
"Had no great love for music. Dr. Arne
Was just a name to her, like Sterndale Bennett.
I fear she held you back." "But, Uncle, please—"
"She meant no harm, she didn't understand."
And handing me the Star Portfolio
Open at page nineteen, *Qui Vive: Duet*,
He bade me read the thick-packed notes by name.
"F sharp," I said. And choked.

But through my tears
Saw, winking yellow at the curtain's edge,
The lights of the Co-Operative Store . . .

(To Be Continued Any Time and at Any Length)

— J. B. BOOTHROYD

Political Missionaries

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

VICE-PRESIDENT NIXON'S eve-of-the-poll promise to send out America's three surviving ex-Presidents, Messrs. Hoover, Truman and (wait for it) Eisenhower, as political missionaries to the uncommitted belt of this troubled planet may have put ideas into the heads of many national leaders. Old boys can be an embarrassment. Former presidents and premiers know too much: they tend to have access to State documents and national archives and therefore to write revealing best-selling autobiographies; they are apt to show up at the club, natter irresponsibly and launch inconvenient rumours about the current administration; they are wont to relive and recount the details of old feuds and claim limelight that the incumbent regards as his by divine right. They are a nuisance. Send them packing on fact-finding missions and the domestic arena suddenly becomes more comfortable and attentive. So . . .

"Reuter reports that Mr. Macmillan has invited Britain's three surviving ex-Premiers, Sir Winston Churchill, Lord Attlee and Sir Anthony Eden to tour

the world (and any other planets that may henceforth become accessible) on a great fact-finding mission. It is expected that the triumvirate, accompanied by their Greek financiers, driving instructors, artists' colourmen, doctors and official biographers, will sail suitably yachted from Southampton early next year. It is understood that . . ."

"General de Gaulle," says *Le Rire*, "has decided to launch France's ex-Premiers on a gigantic fact-finding mission of the globe. Two liners have been withdrawn from transatlantic service and placed at the disposal of the former first ministers who will depart in strict alphabetical order for all countries with the single exception of Algeria. This wise move, it is thought, will ease the housing problem in Paris and provide welcome column-inches for struggling journalists. A list of France's surviving premiers appears on pages nine and ten. President de Gaulle wishes it to be known that the composition of this catalogue should in no way be considered as final: any former premier whose name has been inadvertently omitted is asked to get in touch immediately with the Secretary of the Republic, c/o the Chamber of Deputies. Furthermore, the General . . ."

"From Leopoldville comes the news that the Prime Minister is shortly to dispatch a number of former premiers on a truth-seeking mission of the Earth. It is not easy," says our reporter, "at this moment to hazard more than a guess at the composition of the party. The P.M. (as of this morning) stated in an airport interview that Congolese premiers were among the best in the world. U.N. forces in the Congo have been warned that applications for recruitment to the touring party will be confined solely to Congolese nationals. A similar notice has been served on journalists and B.B.C. reporters. A later dispatch says that the new Prime Minister has endorsed the decision of his predecessor, who before leaving Orangeopolis told our correspondent . . ."

Pravda, Wednesday. "A Kremlin spokesman said to-night that Comrade Khrushchev had invited eighty-three

former members of the Supreme Præsidium to undertake a vast fact-finding mission of the Universe. The itinerary (not finalized at the moment) will include Omsk, Tomsk, Novgorod, Outer Mongolia, Lower Mongolia, Lesser Siberia and Salt Flats, Irkutsk. It is understood that all eighty-three have accepted the invitation with comradely greetings and serene confessions. Some seventy-eight, indeed, are already on their way. Questioned at his dacha in the Moscow suburbs Nikita Khrushchev stated that he was 'satisfied.' A further . . ."

"President-elect John Kennedy said to-day," according to our Baltimore correspondent, "that he will invite ex-Presidents Hoover and Truman, retiring President Dwight Eisenhower, Vice-President Nixon and Mr. Cabot Lodge to make a fact-finding tour of the world on behalf of the U.S. Government. Mr. Nixon will be asked to represent the United States in Latin America, Mr. Truman in Nagasaki and Hiroshima, and Mr. Eisenhower in Gleneagles and St. Andrews. No decision has yet been made about . . ."



"Then the 'cellos come in—Andante con moto."

Punch Civil Disobedience Campaign

Announcing a series of Incitements to Civil Disturbance, Riot, Newspaper Correspondence, etc.

No. 7

NATIONWIDE STAY-IN-BED STRIKE Monday next, Nov. 21

In protest against traffic-jams, road-works, late trains, full buses, wet queues, rude conductors, raised fares, splashed stockings and Related Transport Scandals. Small body of selected volunteers will be allowed up to chalk things on Mr. Marples's front door.

A DAY IN BED NOW MAY FEND OFF THAT NERVOUS BREAKDOWN!

Full details, next-of-kin, etc., to C.A.S.S.A.C., 10 Bouvier Street, London, E.C.4

* Committee for Action of Some Sort at Any Cost



"He wants his voting paper back."

... And Old Port for Ever

By E. S. TURNER

WHEN the *Sporting Times* (alias the *Pink 'Un*) is revived next year after thirty years' suspension, elderly dogs will turn eagerly to see whether it bears the authentic slogan "High Toryism, High Churchism, High Farming and Old Port For Ever."

Even its most loyal readers did not pretend that the *Pink 'Un* dabbled over-much in High Churchism or High Farming (whatever that was), but they would have resented any attempt to tamper with the slogan. What the *Pink 'Un* really stood for was High Living. And, of course, bar-room stories.

It was not only a journal but a way of life. Sporting Bohemians of late Victorian and Edwardian times judged it well worth shortening their lives in order to be accepted as a *Pink 'Un*. In

far-off lands would-be *Pink 'Uns* read their roseate sheet (often their only literary fare) and sighed for green racecourses, Romano's, the Tart parade at the Empire (the *Pink 'Un* always gave tarts a capital T) and the wicked thrill of dining a girl in a *cabinet particulier*.

The *Sporting Times* had an ascetic start. It was the creation of as crusty an editor as ever cursed his contributors: Dr. J. H. Shorthouse, of Carshalton, Surrey, reputedly a good judge of bloodstock. In his first issue in 1865 he swore to avoid the "toad-eating flunkeyism" which disgraced sporting journals, also "the flippant impertinence and slang of the *Cabman's Chronicle*" (a delicate allusion to a rival). It would deal with horses, not with personalities. Nor would it be supported by the advertisements of

"swindling tipsters, horse copers, quack doctors or vendors of indecent photographs." This meant rejecting about eighty per cent of the available revenue, but, said Dr. Shorthouse, "if the paper cannot support itself without such ignoble means it shall die." It would be published "at intervals"; if there seemed to be nothing to write about it would not appear. In practice the journal came out weekly.

Dr. Shorthouse's reporters were slow to learn his requirements. One day he apologized to his readers: "Our correspondents are so verbose and twaddling about the 'weather' and 'horses exercising on their straw beds' that we are tired, as we think our readers will be, of reading such rubbish." To a reader who pointed out a misprint, he replied, "The printers are enough to drive the

THEN AS NOW

President Kennedy is facing many of the same problems as his hero



ROOSEVELT TO THE RESCUE

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT (to Master Dollar). "ALL RIGHT, SONNY, I'LL TAKE YOU ACROSS." March 15, 1933

Devil mad" (an insult which, nowadays, might well precipitate an emergency chapel meeting if not a national walk-out). The views of those who disagreed with Dr. Shorthouse were liable to appear under a heading "Our Dust-Bin: Rubbish May Be Shot Here."

For three months in 1870 the *Sporting Times* was edited from the House of Correction in Coldbath Fields. Outflanking Dr. Shorthouse, a contributor had slipped in a long and scurrilous libel on Sir Joseph Hawley, a leading Turf figure, whom he referred to as Sir Joseph Scratchawley. Dr. Shorthouse at once apologized, but finding his protestations were not accepted he shed some of his penitence and urged readers to watch out for juicy details when the plaintiff came to

be cross-examined. This, coupled with the fact that the issue containing the libel also contained a piece of uncommon rudery about the Queen (it was slyly brought to the Bench's attention by the prosecution), served to strip the Doctor of sympathy. Throughout he refused to name his contributor.

In the House of Correction the Doctor was treated as "a first-class misdemeanant." His staff, who wrote long poems in his praise, made it clear that he was not tramping on a treadmill. His "loosebox," they said, was lofty, well ventilated and had a bright fire in the grate. He had books, newspapers, pen and ink and was allowed six visitors daily; indeed "the illustrious person has all he can possibly desire except liberty." He was still able to

contribute to the journal, "though as a matter of course he has not been permitted to append his name to any communication."

The *Sporting Times* admitted that its hand had been against every man, so it could not expect much sympathy in adversity. In 1874 it was bought for a trivial sum by John Corlett, who had helped Dr. Shorthouse with the first issues. Under his long and more indulgent rule the journal flourished and kept its owner in race-horses (nearly always unsuccessful).

Pinkness came by accident when a printer's devil delivered the wrong consignment of paper. It was decided to capitalize the mistake and soon the phrase "Otherwise Known as the *Pink 'Un*" appeared under the mast-head. Down the years the hue varied from Nymph's Thigh to Drunkard's Flush and occasionally there were accidental reversions to white.

John Corlett, known as "Master" to his staff, decided that the paper should cater for gay dogs or for those who liked to pass for gay dogs. Its interests were Sport, Stage, Wine and Women. The staff pretended that they wrote their pieces in between heroic debauches and that Master spent his time bailing them out and fending off duns. Most of them wrote under pseudonyms. The best-known, and by some still remembered, included "The Pitcher" (Arthur M. Binstead), whose tales of low life, in the view of E. V. Lucas, owed something to Pierce Egan, something to Rabelais and something to Juvenal; and "The Dwarf of Blood" (Lt.-Col. Nathaniel Newnham-Davis), who had been fanned by punkahs in every tropic clime, who had dined in every great house and was credited with the power to make or break a restaurant. The *Pink 'Un* also had one of those misspelled columns supposedly by the Office Boy, an art form which persists in certain journals to this day.

Corlett rode his contributors on an easy rein, knowing that they would turn and run the other way if he applied the spur. In spite of that unfortunate precedent some of them were still privileged to send their copy direct to the printers. Most days of the week the Master lived the life of the country squire he resembled. He was on exchange-of-grapes terms with sporting peers, politicians and judges.

The printers could still give trouble. One of them refused to rise for the National Anthem at an office dinner and was ordered as a penance to set up the verses of the Anthem in type. When he had done so the staff gave three cheers for the Queen, formed up in procession and marched to the Cheshire Cheese to drink her health.

The spicy jokes for which the *Pink 'Un* was notorious are harder to find than one might suppose. Every day the paper acknowledged receipt of stories too ripe to print. Most of these, in due course, found their way from 52 Fleet Street into clubs, messes and, unless rumour lies, vestries, and were regarded as *Pink 'Un* stories though they might never have appeared in print. Of the jests that appeared during the Oscar Wilde trial it is enough to say that Wilde himself could have penned wittier ones. (One example: "It is said that Oscar's favourite among his own plays is *A Woman Of No Importance*.)

In its jubilee number in 1915 the *Pink 'Un* said that it was no longer necessary for ladies to read the paper under cover of the *Church Times*; but the issue of June 19, 1915—if anyone has his file handy—contains a joke, sent all the way from Queensland, which would still drop the temperature of a drawing-room by ten degrees.

Shortly before the paper's jubilee Corlett sold it to a fellow racehorse owner with a name which even his own printers did not always get right; it appeared to be West F. de Wend-Fenton. Many of Corlett's men resigned and started another paper, *Town Topics*. The *Pink 'Un* survived the Kaiser's war (it was the privilege of aliens interned in Alexandra Palace to be guarded by the Dwarf of Blood), but the sporting Bohemian world was no longer what it was. By 1931 the *Pink 'Un* was printing the same jokes and news week after week, the only change in each copy being the date. The question "Why is a well-known baronet's son becoming an officer in the Salvation Army?" posed in January, was still being asked in December. In fact the paper was dead, these copies being printed merely in order to preserve the copyright from poachers. It had needed more than High Toryism and Old Port to keep the *Pink 'Un* alive. What will be the recipe next time? The ghosts of the Dwarf and the Pitcher are watching.

The Explorers' Restaurant

By H. F. ELLIS

I HAD not heard of the Explorers' Restaurant myself until Anderson took me there. But I certainly ought to have deduced its existence. I suppose I have read pretty well every book about exploring ever written, and if there is one thing that stands out a mile it is that the kind of meals explorers relish are not to be had for the asking in any run-of-the-mill chop-house in London or New York. These ends-of-the-earth fellows need something to eat once in a while, even when they are back home in the off-seasons getting together the money and the bags of flour and tincture of iodine they need for the next expedition; and once a man has tasted pemmican or biltong, or the goat's foot old Abdul Najib used to boil so deliciously in stagnant water way back in the foothills behind the Hindu Kush, he is not likely to be satisfied for long with the teased-up confections of Western civilization. He wants something he can get his teeth into—with luck—and Youssef's is the answer.

I met Jim Anderson (you remember Anderson, the only man who ever made the journey across Eastern Turkestan

in under two hundred thousand words)? in a rather unconventional way. I might easily have run across him in the Long Bar at the Troc. or at Jimmy Ryan's on West 52nd Street, had I ever been near either of those places; but as luck would have it what brought us together was a letter I happened to write to him, after reading his *Hadramaut Nights*, asking for the recipe for *kuba*, a kind of soup made with sour camel's milk. He replied, one thing led to another, and finally he rang me up and said I'd better come along with him to Youssef's if I was so interested in out-of-the-way dishes. "Boiled shirt?" I asked eagerly, and he said he thought not. "Though mind you," he added, "there are few things old Youssef can't manage when he puts his mind to it."

It is obvious the moment one enters Youssef's Explorers' Restaurant that no trouble or expense has been spared to make its customers feel at home. The diners sit on upturned flour kegs or cross-legged on the beaten-earth floor, as their choice of menu dictates. The walls, skilfully decorated to suggest the interior of a Baluchistan shepherd's hut,





glisten with real damp. The air was full of the song of bulbuls and the foul reek of hookahs, unless I have that the wrong way round, and the insistent throbbing of tom-toms mingled with an astonishingly accurate representation of the thudding of Cossacks' hoofs. Sheep were being quietly slaughtered in one corner, I noticed, while an Ethiopian contortionist writhed amusingly in the middle of the floor.

Youssef came bustling across to us, the scar that ran across his face from chin to eyebrow lighting up with pleasure as he caught sight of his old comrade, Jim Anderson. The place was crammed, but in no time he had us snugly perched on a heap of half-cured horsehide.

"*Guppati*," said Jim briefly.

I took this to be some form of greeting, but it turned out to be a kind of flat cake, blackened on both sides and made of pounded oatmeal, moistened with rancid oil. We fell to with the sense of well-being that comes only to men who have not tasted *guppati* for many a long year.

"Like it?" Jim asked me.

While I was considering my reply he told me that the secret was to pound the oatmeal on the bare earth, adding the oil gradually, and then heat the mixture on the lid of an old biscuit tin over a camel-dung fire. "The Seluki tribesmen use peat," he added casually, "but it is not the same thing."

I made a note of that.

The next course, an appetizingly aromatic slab of some whitish matter which Youssef dug out of a barrel for us with a harpoon, I did not immediately recognize, until Jim held it to his nose and glanced sharply at the proprietor.

"Is this blubber fresh?" he barked. Youssef was all apologies, explaining

that nowadays these accursed flying-machines brought the seal-meat direct from breathing-hole to table, and he had not the space to rot it down "as you Effendi, would wish." He offered us ripe shark steak instead, but Jim decided that we had better skip the fish and go straight on to yak's meat, his favourite dish.

"Done under the saddle, sahib?"

"Of course," Jim said. "About a hundred *versts*, for me."

I had forgotten, until he reminded me of it, that yak's meat is delicious when prepared according to the Uzbek *haute cuisine*, i.e., spread thickly between horse and saddle and ridden until tender. "That accounts then," I said, "for that inscrutable thudding of hoofs—"

He gave me a look, half amused, half pitying, as if I had never dined out before. "In the compound at the back," he said briefly, and left it at that.

Yak's meat should be held in the fingers, preferably at arm's length, and is customarily washed down with draughts of *tchi* (pronounced "szpyah"), a heady spirit distilled, I believe, from the roots of the rubber tree. We ate and drank royally, and the excitement and novelty of the experience affected me so strongly that when Jim proposed lava-bread and a hunk of Youssef's special cheese, telling me in passing how the latter was prepared, I ventured to make a suggestion of my own.

"Isn't there a tradition—" I began. "I mean, don't you usually, when on an expedition, take with you a case of more conventional delicacies—a gift perhaps from the Vice-consul at Valparaiso—to be opened only on your birthday or some other special occasion? I just wondered—"

"Spoken like an old *shikar*!" Jim roared, slapping his knee with delight. "As it happens this *is* my birthday." Then he shouted for Youssef, who came at the double, characteristically stuffing the salted python he had been skinning into his waistband as he ran.

"I have the very thing," he cried, all smiling eagerness to help as soon as our strange request had been made clear to him. "A gift from my uncle in Tashkent, to be opened on my bath-day. I have kept it ten years!"

We were still roaring over this pregnant sally when Youssef reappeared with a heavy tea-chest which he set down before us. The chest was

strongly bound with wire, but by laying about us with borrowed machetes we soon had it open and peered eagerly inside.

"Plum cake," said Youssef proudly. "And pickled walnuts to follow!"

So richly flavoured was the cake and so redolent of the comforts of home after all we had been through that I confess I was half way through my second mouthful before I realized that it was riddled with white ants. I could not help wondering how Jim would take this, after his disappointment over the seal blubber, but to my relief I saw that he was beaming all over his face as he expertly tapped the ants out against a corner of the tea-chest.

"Congratulations, Youssef!" he cried. "A very nice touch."

The place is not expensive by the way, as things go nowadays. Though I turned my head away politely while Jim was settling up, I could not help noticing that he tendered only a single old Winchester repeater, receiving a prayer-wheel as change, nor that the staff seemed well satisfied with the bag of beads he left discreetly under the pickled walnuts. "We must come back here—one day," I told Jim as we strolled out into the pitiless glare of the lights of Shaftesbury Avenue.



I Wished the Floor Would Open

MIST-trapped on Welsh mountain, visibility next to nil, came off rather neatly (I thought) if laboriously by sheer feel of ground slap down into expected village. Rain stiffening, getting wetter, sought permission to stand in shelter of cottage porch. "Please to come in." Went, reluctantly, under pressure, exuding damp, mud. Daughter of house disappeared momentarily, returned with unherded-for and unheralded steaming tea, scones, cream, etc. Ageing father asked where I came from. Said London. He almost quivered with excitement—if horse, would have whinnied—and, like starving gourmet scenting banquet's approach, exclaimed "Ah! Now we shall have some wit." Never quick talker, from then until rain stopped, full hour, shattered all-time banality records.

— F. L. M.

Need Anybody Be?

By CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

A HARVARD professor has, he claims, invented a Teaching Machine. Instead of the master laboriously explaining how to do the sum and then afterwards telling the pupil how he has got it wrong, the boys go into class and find themselves confronted with a machine with three windows. In the first window is shown a statement of "the relevant facts of the problem." The second window asks a question. The pupils write out their answers and then they turn a knob and the third window corrects them. All the master has to do, claims the Professor, is to go around with a screwdriver tightening up the screws.

It all seems delightfully simple. I am only surprised at the curious confession of the inventor that there are some problems which this machine is not designed to solve. It could not for instance, he says, answer the question "What is the final purpose of life?" Why on earth not? one wonders. "Machines for making more machines," wrote Gordon Bottomley. That surely is an easy one.

There are, it is true, as it appears from the Harvard Professor's account, certain peripheral problems which are as yet unsolved—problems to which I regret to say that neither he nor the machine seem to have given their composite minds. What happens if the pupils want to rag the master? Can the machine produce a secret cane and give them each six of the best? What happens if they crib their answers? Can the machine discriminate between the honest and the dishonest?

Yet it is perhaps hardly necessary to bother one's head too much about the solution to these secondary problems, for the machine self-evidently not only raises the question "Need there be teachers?" but even more insistently "Need there be pupils?" In many walks of life the progressive observer is in these days tempted to ask the question "Are people really necessary?" Listening to a politician making a speech one often wonders what it is

that he does that could not be done much better by a gramophone.

There was a time when authors sometimes used to write their own autobiographies. How distant that all appears! Nobody any longer, it seems, wants to go and watch professional football. The players no longer want to play it. Well why should they? Why waste all that money in fixing the games? Why have the games at all? Why not just have the pools and cut out the games? The machine could easily arrange the results.

So in the classroom what need is there any longer for pupils? The machine can find out all the answers and is put to a lot of unnecessary and uneconomic trouble in explaining to the pupils that they have got them wrong. But does it matter whether the pupils get the answers right or wrong? Why should they get them at all? Why should they not just turn on the machine and find out what the answer is as their fathers do when they get hold of the computer? It is said that the pupils must "train their minds," must "develop their personalities." Whatever for? "The machine," says its inventor, "cannot deal with feelings, emotions, ideas." But as long ago as



Brave New World Aldous Huxley had sorted that one out. Why have feelings and emotions and ideas? We will need, it is true, one or two men to keep the machines running—a Vice-Chancellor here and there with his mortarboard and screwdriver and dungarees, but by and large need there be people any more? "We are determined never again to tolerate widespread unemployment in the land," say our leaders. Fair enough, and as long as there are boys there must indeed be jobs for the boys. But why need we have either boys or jobs so long as the machines can provide everything that is required by us? Why did I say "by us"? Why, when it comes to that, need there be "us"?

They

THEY are doing away with the rod and the pole and the perch;
They are hounding the halfpenny; over the Scottish border
They have set an august committee of Bar and Church
To putting the matter of Gretna Green in order;

They want us to drive on the right; the decimal system
Is close to their hearts. Of course they are justified
In every case, but I think that we ought to resist 'em—
Not let these "reforms" come easy. Otherwise pride

In achieving an orderly, unanomalous state
Will go to their heads, and we'll find ourselves one day
A nation with all things logical, all roads straight,
A nation which other nations refer to as "They."

— PETER DICKINSON

The Age War

Now that America (with which is incorporated the Free World) is to be led by a mere boy, politics on this side of the Atlantic may get a much-needed shot in the arm. Politically the class-struggle has had its day. Wealth versus poverty is a battle reduced to small, formal skirmishes. Party warfare as we knew it is petering out, owing to the discouraging effect of each side wearing the other's uniforms. But Youth against Age is a new concept in politics. The Age War is on.

JOIN THE Y.A.P.

A
MESSAGE
FROM
OUR
LEADER



The Young Action Party, man, is the party of Youth and Action.

This country has been run by a bunch of old squares. And what have they done except grow older?

Y.A.P., man, will have itself a ball. We know what the cats really dig, what gets them swinging.

Those oldies, they call us "Citizens of the Future." The future, hell. We are Citizens of NOW.

Tony Gall (aged 19)

The Tops of the Props

Dig our Six-star Programme

★ **Foreign Policy.** Y.A.P. will cement relations with cats from all over, but withdraw Ambassadors from countries ruled by over-fifties. Example: Jack Kennedy in, Castro in, Khrush out, Adenauer out (but out).

★ **Education** is O.K. by Y.A.P. for those who want it. Those that don't can duck out early (twelve, say). Those that do can stay, scholarshipped by the State. Dress will be optional, and that means plaid jeans.

★ **Defence.** We'll dump the bomb, for sure. The Aldermaston march will stay as an annual jazz-fest. Conscription for daddies into the Beef-eaters and Chelsea Pensioners.

★ **Health.** We go for a research programme on what makes oldies old, like. Why should a cat leave Y.A.P.? We'll get those doctors swinging on this, boy.

★ **Finance.** The older they are the more we'll soak them. We'll have them really wailing.

★ **Franchise.** We'll lay the vote on the kids, down to sixteen first off.

Do These Things Shock You?

Anne Ripple lives at 27 Painswick Road, Andover. She is nineteen. Both her parents are well over forty. Anne hopes to become a top model. She is being forced to learn shorthand-typing.

It couldn't happen under Y.A.P.

Hon. Peregrine Gallowglass lives in Chelsea. He is twenty. He has been unlucky enough to have been driving fast cars three times this year at the moment they crashed. His parents have halved his "allowance."

It couldn't happen under Y.A.P.

John Stegg and Amelia Hughes-Hughes are twenty-two and seventeen respectively. Their address is not known because they are in hiding. All they want to do is marry. If they are found John will be sent to prison by a judge who will probably be at least seventy.

It couldn't happen under Y.A.P.

The Y.A.P. Song

(as sung by Rick Peters, fifteen-year-old star of stage and screen)

They said we were too young,
Too young to rule the land,
They said we were too young,
Too young to understand
They said that we
Must Wait and See.
Now my Teen Chancellor
Is in the Treasury.
My Teen Chancellor
My Teen Chancellor
Is governing me.



Trust The Old Wise Leaders

The Reasons Why

The Old Wise Leaders, or O.W.L.s, are by definition old and wise, and they lead. They almost always have led. There have been exceptions; they prove the rule; in fact the more exceptions one may cite, the stronger must be the rule.

The O.W.L.s have only now established a formal organization because until recently the young people of this country constituted a reasonable acquiescent majority. That was when we were young, and, looking ahead into our rear-view mirrors, properly placed gerontology above all other sciences. Now that the ordinary span of life has been sufficiently extended to ensure the numerical as well as the intellectual superiority of the elders, the new young paradoxically are suggesting that their voices are becoming more important. The O.W.L.s are dedicated to exposing this fallacy and taking suitable precautions from time to time against enactment of the public policies that the young would self-destructively derive from it.

To-day's youth is to-morrow's middle-age and the next day's O.W.L. We know we can count on a vote of thanks from posterity. We are determined that all young people shall be saved from their own impetuosity so that they may eventually inherit the wheel-chairs and hearing aids they deserve. Then they, too, will realize that there is no leader like an old leader.

Our Programme

Pragmatism; empiricism; wait and see: these are the guiding principles that give our position its unique qualities, at once solid and flexible. While the Y.A.P.s shrilly clamour for specific distortions of our time-tested establishment, we calmly meet each challenge with the elastic resistance that harmlessly exhausts it.

Even so we believe in moving with the times, moving as they move, and no faster, so that we maintain our relative station with our environment. For example we recognize the eligibility of members of the Bow Group to join the Young Seniors' Association, from whose ranks elevation to easel senility is a graceful automatic process.

Where Reform is Needed

Within this secure framework certain adjustments may be required. Our Leader, himself getting no younger, has decided that those of most advanced age must now assume new responsibilities: the only duties of our pensioners will be military. The youngest men of Britain will continue to be conscripted for ceremonial activities and for shipment abroad for maturing; meanwhile, the important military functions, the radar-watching, the decision-taking, the final button-pushing, will be performed by us who are so advanced in years that we are able to countenance questions of life and death and resolve them in unemotional terms.

Our Motto

Age at the helm and nostalgia at the stern. May there be large anchors for all!



Campaign buttons for both parties can be obtained from all authorized campaign button suppliers.



Science Fiction gets a shot in the arm from this series showing how the great novelists would have handled the theme



Kipling in Space

By RICHARD USBORNE

*Don't tell Dora,
But I've visited Aurora
Where she lingered rosy-fingered in the sky.
Don't tell Freda
(Or she might remember Leda)
But I've swanned about on Venus
With no cloud-cover between us,
To probe the proper postulates of π.
Don't tell Irma,
Who's a girl for terra firma . . . etc., etc.*

—Song of the First Year Astronauts

"AND she says he still asks her to read to him in bed," said Stalky to me in a far too loud whisper. Old Stalky, Major-General A. L. Corkran to you, with a raft of letters after his name, a shrapnel furrow from Suvla up his jaw, recurrent ague (the North West Frontier put a mark on her children in his day, and modern *Aesculapians*, with all their triumphs, cannot exorcise bone-deep Frontier fever) and a deep-voiced, broad-thewed, six-foot grandson.

That's several other stories, all but the grandson. Had not Stalky been carried off, *consule Planco*, and the Infant, Agnes Strickland and I abetting, by that gentle American girl whose mother had been an English Lashmar? And had they not seen a son grow tall to their name? Through Sunday School at Aldershot, up to Haileybury whither, without squeak or gibber, many of the *Lares and Penates* of the old Coll., smoked out from its cat-scented rafters, had passed to new haunting grounds. And from Haileybury to Harvard, to marry, on his twentieth birthday, a breath-taking seventeen-year-old Shonts of Connecticut, and to receive, as a pluperfect *pignus amoris* on his twenty-first birthday, a fussy kidling with a twinkle in one eye and lungs of the lustiest.

Stalky the Third, this kidling beloved, now twenty-two if a day. His father, Stalky the Second, had died at three thousand feet in the Last War of All, as his bomb took the Hsin King, atomic pride of the new Chinese battle fleet, at the water-line and, as the French say, "made her jump," *anglice* blew her to shared Sino-British glory, to disappear in a shade under two minutes. Stalky the First, not long a widower, lost a son, and the double blow bent his teak frame. His son's widow had gone dry-eyed for four days when she heard the news, and had then wept for eighteen. Afterwards she had given herself for life to the living.

The Young 'Un, as we called him, had shown scientific signs early. "Mumsie," he had said, stamping his little gum-booted foot, the Corkran word of command in a voice still years from breaking, "Mumsie, when I come back from Miss Barry's each afternoon I want to find the TV *on*, warmed up and *on*," and it was so thereafter, a ritual, the Mother-Priestess lighting the flame with her own hand. She had wept, out of love, when he had thus commanded her. She had wept, in pride and fear, when she had caught him shaving for the first time with his father's dug-out Six-O Remington. She had wept again, with pride and cold terror, when he had said, fresh from A.E.I. College, "Mumsie, Chuck, Dick and I have been taken for C.I.S.A.C."

Now C.I.S.A.C. for the uninitiated is a branch of our Western Federation Telecommunications Research Mandate, and it stands for Canaveral-Iceland-Shetland-Azores-Canaries.

* * * * *

We were guests of the Infant, Stalky and I for the manyth time, Stalky's daughter-in-law and his grandson not for the first.

"Beetle, you saw this coming," said Stalky the First, lapped in rugs in front of the Infant's baronial fireplace, while the cedar and spruce roared in his face and warmed his transparent skin, and the Infant's best Bourbon warmed his blood, and the company warmed his heart, and his grandson's mother played forgotten melodies for our delectation at the heirloom Bechstein in the shadows.

"We knew arms and the men . . . King's phrase . . . 'member?" I said. "I guessed the weapons of war would perish, swords would be hammered into ploughshares and traffics and discoveries be the commonplace of the firmament above the earth.* But I thought it would still be men's work. And now, it's boys, all boys!"

Stalky said "Infant, you're host. Can't you stop this hairy old two-anna basket-hanger from quotin' things? Eighty years ago I would have kicked him, and frequently did. He talks such blitherin' essential guts! Let's have some more of your frabjous Kentucky nectar." The bottle came, and I turned to his grandson and said "Young 'Un, there are no politicals here. Tell us how you made that landing."

*With The Night Mail: *Actions and Reactions*

I saw him puff out his nostrils between his downy cheeks. It was Old Stalky over again. O Chinns, O Rivett-Carnacs, O Lashmars, O Corkrans! They'd made their breakthrough on genes at St. Mary's just after the Sokolow-Blondstein group had throttled cancer in Kibishev and the Mitsui-Chelleram combine had taught us to harvest the sea. That was the Annus Mirabilis, and thanks be it had been in our otherwise ending lifetime. War had gone utterly, and fear of hell, and fear of starvation. And we die in dignity these days, when our work's done and we ask. We have doubled the Psalmist's three score and ten. But wonder at heredity is still hard to break. Still in mind it sends me to my knees when I see a Cottar ride, a bull-terrier of the Garm strain jump to his master's chest in welcome, and a Corkran puff out his nostrils. O rippin'! Will the Young 'Un be making puns in Pushtu next?

"Not for me to tell the story, sir, really it isn't, and the technical report is in the archives." (Pukka public school English with an American accent. You can't beat it.) "It was a two-month (in our time) trip as planned. To orbit Uron at proto-level. They'd done it to deutero-level from Woomera that spring, and, if our tests gave the right answers, Moscow would be sending a landing expedition next year. It's team work, of course, but there's always rivalry between teams, and some jealousy. We had our IC (sorry, Ionosphere Clearance) and our job was to cuddle round close, test equipment, drop gas-markers in three colours, and return. Everythin' automatic . . ."

"Automatic litmus paperin' among the stars!" I said. "Infant, 'member little Hartopp's stinks biznai . . . 'Litmus, litmus, don't forget your litmus tests' he used to drone."

"Something like litmus, yes, sir," said the Young 'Un. Stalky the First looked across at the boy, and at us, as I remember that, in that very room, Agnes Strickland had looked across at her boy, calling on us to adore. Had not Stalky taken his grandson to the Senior and lunched him at the Round Table with others of the Retired whose grandsons were *not* the youngest D.S.A.P.s (Distinguished Service Astral Pathfinders) in the world?

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"And now we've got a slow puncture."

Science Fiction gets a shot in the arm from this series showing how the great novelists would have handled the theme



Kipling in Space

By RICHARD USBORNE

*Don't tell Dora,
But I've visited Aurora
Where she lingered rosy-fingered in the sky.
Don't tell Freda
(Or she might remember Leda)
But I've swanned about on Venus
With no cloud-cover between us,
To probe the proper postulates of π.
Don't tell Irma,
Who's a girl for terra firma . . . etc., etc.*

—Song of the First Year Astronauts

"AND she says he still asks her to read to him in bed," said Stalky to me in a far too loud whisper. Old Stalky, Major-General A. L. Corkran to you, with a raft of letters after his name, a shrapnel furrow from Suvla up his jaw, recurrent ague (the North West Frontier put a mark on her children in his day, and modern Æsculapians, with all their triumphs, cannot exorcise bone-deep Frontier fever) and a deep-voiced, broad-thewed, six-foot grandson.

That's several other stories, all but the grandson. Had not Stalky been carried off, *consule Planco*, and the Infant, Agnes Strickland and I abetting, by that gentle American girl whose mother had been an English Lashmar? And had they not seen a son grow tall to their name? Through Sunday School at Aldershot, up to Haileybury whither, without squeak or gibber, many of the *Lares* and *Penates* of the old Coll., smoked out from its cat-scented rafters, had passed to new haunting grounds. And from Haileybury to Harvard, to marry, on his twentieth birthday, a breath-taking seventeen-year-old Shonts of Connecticut, and to receive, as a pluperfect *pignus amoris* on his twenty-first birthday, a fussy kidling with a twinkle in one eye and lungs of the lustiest.

Stalky the Third, this kidling beloved, now twenty-two if a day. His father, Stalky the Second, had died at three thousand feet in the Last War of All, as his bomb took the Hsin King, atomic pride of the new Chinese battle fleet, at the water-line and, as the French say, "made her jump," *anglice* blew her to shared Sino-British glory, to disappear in a shade under two minutes. Stalky the First, not long a widower, lost a son, and the double blow bent his teak frame. His son's widow had gone dry-eyed for four days when she heard the news, and had then wept for eighteen. Afterwards she had given herself for life to the living.

The Young 'Un, as we called him, had shown scientific signs early. "Mumsie," he had said, stamping his little gum-booted foot, the Corkran word of command in a voice still years from breaking, "Mumsie, when I come back from Miss Barry's each afternoon I want to find the TV *on*, warmed up and *on*," and it was so thereafter, a ritual, the Mother-Priestess lighting the flame with her own hand. She had wept, out of love, when he had thus commanded her. She had wept, in pride and fear, when she had caught him shaving for the first time with his father's dug-out Six-O Remington. She had wept again, with pride and cold terror, when he had said, fresh from A.E.I. College, "Mumsie, Chuck, Dick and I have been taken for C.I.S.A.C."

Now C.I.S.A.C. for the uninitiated is a branch of our Western Federation Telecommunications Research Mandate, and it stands for Canaveral-Iceland-Shetland-Azores-Canaries.

* * * * *

We were guests of the Infant, Stalky and I for the manyth time, Stalky's daughter-in-law and his grandson not for the first.

"Beetle, you saw this coming," said Stalky the First, lapped in rugs in front of the Infant's baronial fireplace, while the cedar and spruce roared in his face and warmed his transparent skin, and the Infant's best Bourbon warmed his blood, and the company warmed his heart, and his grandson's mother played forgotten melodies for our delectation at the heirloom Bechstein in the shadows.

"We knew arms and the men . . . King's phrase . . . 'member?" I said. "I guessed the weapons of war would perish, swords would be hammered into ploughshares and traffics and discoveries be the commonplace of the firmament above the earth.* But I thought it would still be men's work. And now, it's boys, all boys!"

Stalky said "Infant, you're host. Can't you stop this hairy old two-anna basket-hanger from quotin' things? Eighty years ago I would have kicked him, and frequently did. He talks such blitherin' essential guts! Let's have some more of your frabjous Kentucky nectar." The bottle came, and I turned to his grandson and said "Young 'Un, there are no politicals here. Tell us how you made that landing."

*With The Night Mail: Actions and Reactions

I saw him puff out his nostrils between his downy cheeks. It was Old Stalky over again. O Chinns, O Rivett-Carnacs, O Lashmars, O Corkrans! They'd made their breakthrough on genes at St. Mary's just after the Sokolow-Blondstein group had throttled cancer in Kibishev and the Mitsui-Chelleram combine had taught us to harvest the sea. That was the Annus Mirabilis, and thanks be it had been in our otherwise ending lifetime. War had gone utterly, and fear of hell, and fear of starvation. And we die in dignity these days, when our work's done and we ask. We have doubled the Psalmist's three score and ten. But wonder at heredity is still hard to break. Still in mind it sends me to my knees when I see a Cottar ride, a bull-terrier of the Garm strain jump to his master's chest in welcome, and a Corkran puff out his nostrils. O rippin'! Will the Young 'Un be making puns in Pushtu next?

"Not for me to tell the story, sir, really it isn't, and the technical report is in the archives." (Pukka public school English with an American accent. You can't beat it.) "It was a two-month (in our time) trip as planned. To orbit Uricon at proto-level. They'd done it to deutero-level from Woomera that spring, and, if our tests gave the right answers, Moscow would be sending a landing expedition next year. It's team work, of course, but there's always rivalry between teams, and some jealousy. We had our IC (sorry, Ionosphere Clearance) and our job was to cuddle round close, test equipment, drop gas-markers in three colours, and return. Everythin' automatic . . ."

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"And now we've got a slow puncture."



"It's all right I suppose, but it's not my idea of Heaven."

"And you were in command?" said his grandfather. It was a *nonne* question, proud.

"Team of fourteen of us," the Young 'Un answered, "and eight weeks to grow sick to death of each other. No girls (sorry, Mumsie!). No pills. Hypno-stasis makes it easy, like oxygen did for Everest. We were taking it desert island fashion. Plenty of books, movies, bounced TV and radio, of course. And Canaveral kept us in touch with our families by phone when the cracklin' wasn't too bad. Am I borin' you, sir?"

Boring us to tell us how they planned against boredom!

"*Continuez, mon enfant!*" I said, and he smiled at something he remembered.

"First class crew I had, keen as mustard, and I *may* have helped the conversation round in those first four weeks, to what a rag it'd be if we could do a blind eye to Canaveral and *use* the landing gear we were carrying for final weight and structure tests."

His mother had come from the piano and was standing behind his chair, her arms round his neck and her hands in his.

"You've heard all this, Mumsie, and I talked to you most days of the trip. Won't you go on playing?" he said, with a smile that we were not supposed to see. Such a smile it is a mother's privilege to receive. We can only record.

"And Dick showed round a photograph of a girl, and Chuck knew her, and there was a quarrel," she said, "and

you, my darling, ordered them to fight it out like schoolboys and gentlemen. I know!"

"Yes," the Young 'Un blushed. "We got their seats and strappings set for a good old toe-to-toe mill, Merriman suits and all, three minutes, to astro-Queensberry rules! And while my Numbers Two and Three were fightin', and everybody cheerin' and shuntin' and bargin', I saw my chance. We were nearing orbit then, and all I had to do was to throw the Garman switch to cut out Canaveral control. The siren sounded, and my chaps were sure the switch had got knocked in the rag, and now we'd have to land. It was a gamble, but they were all keen, and it worked. Dick was nursing a diamond-shaped embrasure on his cheek, and Chuck was mopping it and saying 'Sorry,' when I focused, the port and top-skin jets roared and she started to go down."

"First on Uron?" said the Infant.

"Yes, sir. We were first on Uron. Wasn't difficult." Stalky the First reached for a new cheroot.

"We stayed two earth days and reconnoitred, and then reset the computers, waved goodbye and came back. Not a hitch. General Wykes at Canaveral said he thought of having us all put in prison. But I said it was my fault for allowing the fight, and he gave me a fearful verbal lickin' and then said he was proud of us."

"And you had planned this all the time, Young 'Un?"

"Fraid so, sir. And they proved that, when it was too late to go back on what they'd said, praisin' us for 'commendable resource in the face of emergencies.' When the Muscovites did their final official landing they found a flag I'd left there, an old fashioned Union Jack I'd discovered in the boot-cupboard at home and I'd smuggled into the craft. For just this."

"You planted that, Young 'Un?" I said.

"Yes, sir, and I 'member that I'd worried that Uron mightn't have anything for a flag to stand in. But that oil-shale we found was just right. And I said to Dick and Chuck '*Ti-ra-la-la-i-tu!*' I gloat. It sticks!' They didn't understand . . ."

"But we do, Young 'Un," said his grandfather and the Infant and I together. We looked at the fire for a long time.

"And now, grandfather, it's you for bed," said the Young 'Un, and we helped Major-General A. L. Corkran upstairs.

Coming:

CONAN DOYLE

JAMES JOYCE

JOHN GALSWORTHY

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Rather slow orbit, though.

What's in the Papers?

By R. G. G. PRICE

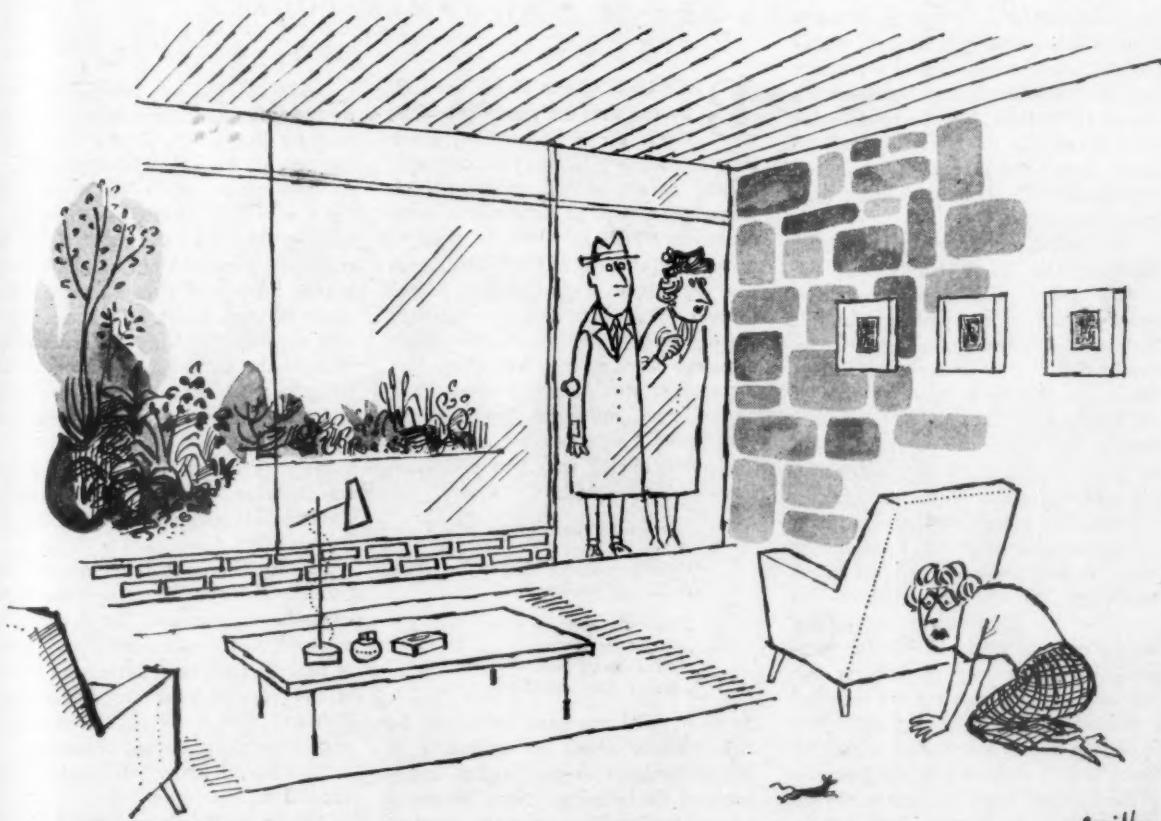
M R. MOSLEY'S book on Curzon has sparked off a wonderful argument about whether Lord Beaverbrook breathes down the necks of his employees when they are writing biographies based on papers he has bought from the families of statesmen and deposited in New Brunswick. Mr. Mosley, who ought to know, says that far from breathing down his neck Lord Beaverbrook was miles away, as Mr. Mosley did much of the writing in France. I should not, myself, have thought a little obstacle like that would have hampered his lordship who, one has been given to understand, is ubiquitous in thought, word and deed. However, a more interesting point is whether these purchases of the raw

materials of history are still going on or whether they are to be limited to witnesses of Lord Beaverbrook's early middle-age. Are the Attlee papers still in Great Missenden, the Eden papers still in Pewsey, the Gaitskell papers still in Frogny, Hampstead?

If his lordship's enthusiasm for contemporary history still burns bright it seems to me that fallen statesmen and retired statesmen and even statesmen who do not quite make the grade are on to a good thing. Instead of writing memoranda for the Cabinet which may end up victims of the Official Secrets Act—who owns the copyright of those, by the way?—the wise front bencher is providing for his family by piling up massive journals, diaries, argumentative

letters and ledgers filled with gossip. If from time to time Lord Beaverbrook gets referred to in them so much the better. It is pleasant to think of Sir Derek Walker-Smith and Mr. James Griffiths and Mr. Clement Davies all scribbling things like "I hear Macleod has given the Colonial Office the biggest shake-up a department has had since the Beaver went to the Ministry of Aircraft Production."

Lord Beaverbrook is not of course the only rich and public-spirited newspaper owner. There is another Canadian, Mr. Roy Thomson, bustling about Fleet Street. He owns a paper which is eternally serializing the eminent. I sometimes wonder whether their contracts give him the first pick of



Smilby



collections of Selwyn Lloyd draft speeches.

The legendary diary of "Chips" Channon is kept unopened in the British Museum, but there are no doubt many diaries that blush unseen and talent vultures are no doubt hovering over them. If any are in cipher, like Pepys's Diary, it would be an unenterprising newspaper tycoon or takeover bidder who could not command decoding experts. Yet the big prizes will never be the reports of onlookers, however well placed, because tycoons will never be content until the secrets of the really powerful are in their hands. Any battles over the Wardlaw-Milne papers or the Irene Ward papers or the Barnet Stross papers will be absolutely nothing to the fight for the Macmillan

papers, to be won, perhaps, by some Middle Eastern oil sheikh who will keep them in caves like the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Death duties, however ingeniously guarded against, lead to unforeseen transfers of property, and one cannot be quite certain that Lord Beaverbrook's own papers will not, in the course of time, come on the market. Executors will, perhaps, try to get the Treasury to accept them in lieu of hard cash. The British Museum would be expected to provide adequate accommodation for them, though I cannot avoid the uncomfortable feeling that they might slip by inadvertence into the Loan Section and that some of them might be deposited in libraries here and there about the world to be lectured upon by British Council lecturers.

"My Son, My Stone!"

By JAMES TUCKER

BECAUSE he was Welsh but had, by the time he was twenty-five, taken on a series of English characteristics—£1,750 a year, cut-away collars, suede bootees, polish—Hugh frequently practised nationalistic compensation rituals in which he tried to involve me and any of his other friends who were about. Over the years we had learned to predict with fair accuracy when these atavistic, folklorique occasions were near. Sometimes, for instance, he would chant a song which, he said, his monoglot Welsh great-grandfather had composed and taught him on a hillock in Caernarvonshire. For us he translated:

*My hearth and home
Beneath the roof
Of strong Welsh slate
Is full of pleasure.*

*Before the fire
My father sings;
And I mend shoes
Against dank weather.*

At such times we knew he would be feeling shame about his service flat in Knightsbridge and the English excellence of his tailoring. Soon he would want to expiate his treacheries. We had time to escape.

However, we did not always get a warning. One afternoon in early summer Hugh, Bruce and I were walking through a wood in Monmouthshire. As was usual when we went into the countryside Hugh had brought a number of maps: not modern, useful maps but copies of old ones. We sat against a tree and after a few minutes' study of them Hugh said he reckoned that we were following the exact route used in the tenth century by a Welsh princess when escaping with her child and nurse from soldiers escorting them to prison.

"The Princess Rhiannon and the boy, Morgan," he murmured, affecting the Rhondda accent he kept for moments like this.

I said: "Look, there are at least two fordings she would have to make if she came the way you said. We've been able to avoid them because we've got plenty of time; but not her. The rivers are icy all the year and, since she came through in March, they would have been at their widest because of the snows melting."

"I know, I know," he said. "But she did it."

"They couldn't have come this way. I'd bet on it," I said.

"By God, we ought to try it." Hugh stood up abruptly and began to test the ground with his cycling shoe, as if this were relevant.

Bruce said: "Yes, we ought, one day."

"No, I mean now," Hugh said.

"Oh, good God," I said.

"I'm telling you it can be done," Hugh said. He had grown masterful—he was a captain in the Territorial Army—and a bit annoyed with me.

"Impossible," I said.

"No." We were in a part of the county where he had a grandfather and a couple of uncles. I wondered if he believed Rhiannon and the boy to be valiant predecessors. "Let's try it," he said. There was a mad, officer-cadet keenness about him. He stood over me and Bruce, tall, thin and strong, and I

suppose I was a bit ashamed to refuse. "Bruce can be the nurse," he said. "I'll be Rhiannon." He looked around and found a big stone which he wrapped in his jacket. "That's about the size and weight of the baby. Jim, you be the pursuit. When we get to the starting point give us an hour and then come after us; that's about the lead Rhiannon had. We've got to get through the wood to the perimeter to succeed. They picked up horses there, by prearrangement. Once we're out of the wood we've escaped, O.K.?"

I said: "Oh, look here, Hugh, if you're so certain ——"

"No, Jim, let's try it now."

I said: "What do you feel, Bruce?"

"I'm in," he said, almost retching with fear.

We walked to the starting-point. When we reached it Hugh said: "Of course, the women would be wearing a lot of clothes, which would have been hellish difficult in the water. A big factor. We can't do much about that but we could use these as long skirts—to make things a bit more realistic." Each of us was carrying a cycling cape. We had left the cycles back on the road. Hugh began to fix his with the neck opening around his waist. The bottom of the cape swept the ground. Bruce stood around watching him, half laughing. Hugh walked a few steps to see if he could manage the garment and then glanced at Bruce. Bruce undid the string on his rolled cape, dropped it down over his head, and wriggled until he too was properly costumed.





"And to go with it of course you'll need a brief-case for your radio, television and recording contracts."

"Of course, it was dark," I said.

"There was a moon, I think," Hugh said quickly.

"A moon is not daylight," I said.

"Oh, come on now, Jim, we can't simulate all the conditions," Bruce said.

"No, Jim is right," Hugh said. "It won't be a fair test. We'll tie a handkerchief over our eyes. Just a single thickness, and tightly. You can see through it, but vision is limited—as in moonlight."

On the way to the starting-point Hugh had carried the stone which was Morgan fairly casually. Now, though, he began to fold his jacket around it carefully, as if it were the covering of a child of eighteen months. "Try holding him," he said to Bruce. "The nurse carried him part of the way, until she got tired. I think that's about the weight and size."

Bruce took the bundle disgustedly, using one hand, and the stone slid out and struck him on the knee. Hugh picked it up and gave it to him again. Bruce said "I don't have to feed him, do I? I'm not wet."

Hugh said quietly: "Come on, Bruce. Stop assing about. Just let's see if this can be done." He began to tie the handkerchief around Bruce's eyes. Then I did Hugh's.

His cape was new, yellow and stiff; it stood out from his legs as if he were wearing hoops. Bruce's was older and hung close to him, hindering his movement.

They moved off, Hugh first. After a while they started to go faster as the downward slope grew steeper, and soon I had to put the binoculars on them. Hugh was moving very well, his arms swinging powerfully, his head back. No princess could have had more bearing. Bruce was not far behind, but he was stumbling and pushing his way along, hunched over the jacket and stone in a way he must have thought protective.

I kept the glasses on Hugh for a while, imagining him shouting some appalling Welsh song as he ran, his breath even and plentiful. When I looked for Bruce again I couldn't find him. His cape was green-grey and it was difficult to pick him out among the

fern and trees. I wished Hugh would stop and look for him. Eventually, when he was quite near the first river, he did. He turned and peered about. But I saw Bruce before he did. He was sitting, half-lying, against a tree, and looked as if he was smoking. His skirt was up around his waist and he had pushed the handkerchief up from his eyes and on to his forehead. He was in a quite open spot of ground and had made no attempt to hide.

Hugh soon came on him. Bruce didn't get up and I supposed they were arguing. Bruce seemed to be offering him a cigarette. Hugh paced and gesticated and pulled Bruce's skirt down.

Then Hugh stooped and took hold of Bruce's arm. There was a small struggle. Bruce was slowly pulled up. Hugh kept hold of his arm and helped him along. After a while they stopped and Hugh adjusted Bruce's blindfold. This is how it had been in the real escape, though the nurse had not collapsed as soon as Bruce. I could now see clearly that Bruce was smoking.

When they reached the river they stood for some time looking at it. They were still. I think Hugh was just starting to see how dangerous it was going to be. He went slowly into the water and almost at once was up to his shoulders. His skirt floated and lay on the surface so that he looked like a yellow lily. He came out and strode about the bank, probably trying to keep warm. I imagined he was telling Bruce his plan for the crossing.

Hugh went in again, this time more carefully. When the water was across his chest he turned and waited. Bruce went on to his knees and handed Hugh the jacket and stone. Hugh put the bundle on his head and held it with one hand. Bruce stood and then went a little deeper into the river and stopped. Hugh was being carried by the current away from him. This was obviously involuntary for Bruce stood there like a helpless old nurse, his arms held out to Hugh, trying to draw him back.

Hugh started to swim. He used a sort of side-stroke which enabled him to keep one hand for the jacket and stone on his head. When he had gone about a quarter of the way over he turned and trod water, searching for Bruce swimming behind him. He saw him standing with water only up to his knees, near the

bank, and remained facing him for a few minutes. I expect he was shouting encouragement to him. Having stopped swimming Hugh was once again being borne downstream, faster this time. He must suddenly have realized this for he gave up Bruce and reverted to his former swimming style. As he did so he disappeared completely under the surface for half a second. When he came up the bundle was no longer on his head. I saw the jacket begin to float away from him; and it was soon uncatchable. In any case he did not bother with it. He began to do frantic surface dives, disappearing for a quarter or half a minute at a time. The water was dark and

opaque. It was obvious he would never find the stone. I noticed that, in his panic at wanting to recover it before it drowned, he had ripped off the blindfold. How could he justify that?

He went on diving for seven or eight minutes. I suppose that was reasonable. If he'd found it he could have carried it to the bank and simulated artificial respiration. But he didn't recover it. Finally he swam despondently back to Bruce. It was useless going on without the heir. I began to move down the hill.

When I reached the river they were lying on the ground. Hugh was shivering. He said "You're not wearing your blindfold."

"I'b sorry, badab . . ." The rest of the eleventh denial got trapped in the minute piece of overworked cambric. Idly I reflected that with so many nasal convulsions going on it was extremely unlikely that even one seat was concealed within the tight tubes of her conventional black.

The inquisition was resumed when the ailment had been patched up temporarily.

"What is there in the stalls, then?"

"Only row A . . . or Eb at the back, badab."

"Nonsense! Row A's far too close. You can't see anything for make-up." Aunt Emily didn't deign to comment on row Eb.

I glanced at the foyer clock; only one minute to go. Underneath, an awesome notice carried the threat that patrons arriving after the curtain had risen would not be permitted to take their seats until the first interval.

Things began to happen simultaneously. I nervously plucked at my aunt's georgette sleeve and was repulsed. Behind, the little knot of people unanimously gave up all hope of seeing the performance and began herding disconsolately towards the street. The house manager frantically signalled the commissionaire to try to

A Night Out

By ALEX TAIT

AUNT Emily and I are inveterate theatregoers, but it must be confessed that I only escorted her there once. I say escorted: in fact she bought the tickets. But that was only the beginning.

"I've a feeling they're not good seats," she declared in her Edwardian college accent, after we'd climbed to the Circle and left our things in the cloakroom.

Her premonition jolted mine, and I gave a groan.

We sidled through row J in the direction of the wall. She didn't even sit down to try it. Her lips had disappeared and that always heralds trouble for someone. I was bound to agree that the position wasn't up to much, for by my reckoning the bar interval would be handicapped by at least two minutes each way.

So we sidled back through J en route to the box-office.

"I'b sorry, badab, do . . ." the wilting flower of cashierhood snuffled for the tenth time into a damp handkerchief poised ready to mop up each sneeze at birth. Nine times already she had resisted Aunt Emily's claim to as many different pairs of seats from which in the past she had satisfactorily viewed various productions. Now, not one pair was available.



"Clive sends his love too . . ."

head them back, then flew into the box-office to take over. The wilting cashier retired and pillow'd her head on the cluttered table in the background. The clock ticked ominously.

"It's quite simple, young man. These Dress Circle seats . . ."

"Quite so, madam, but as you already know, there's nothing here to suit you."

Aunt Emily turned on a winsome smile for her next question.

"Any cancellations?"

"We may have had, earlier," he boxed cagily, and there was no mistaking the emphasis on the past tense, "but they've all gone. Now, if you'll kindly let the other people . . ."

"Can't an attendant check the empty seats? There must be some."

The H. M. flourished a bunch of tickets over his head to give hope to the muttering waverers. I turned my back and became absorbed in a seating plan screwed to the wall, hoping thereby to convey the impression that I belonged to a different planet—albeit one inhabited by red-faced people.

Near by, the foyer clock ticked the precious minutes away.

"I don't mind paying a little extra," Aunt Emily added.

I caught a gleam in the manager's eye and hastily withdrew to my reading matter. I was afraid of what he might say. Instead, he explained: "It's no use, madam. I know the position from the plan and ticket books."

"But if they're unoccupied?"

"It doesn't make any difference. Seats can't be sold more than once." I thought his argument pretty logical.

"What about agents' tickets?" she demanded next, "Don't tell me they sold out completely."

"Any unsold came back well over an hour ago and have already gone."

Through the side window he deftly disposed of the pair of stalls in row Eb. The clock tick was grating on my nerves.

"There *must* be something . . . somewhere . . ."

The telephone rang at the manager's elbow and Aunt Emily broke off

expectantly. He took the message, scribbling down a couple of numbers.

"There's luck," he sighed, replacing the receiver, "two people can't make it. A couple of stalls, row F, centre gangway. D'you want 'em?"

"Are they together?"

The H. M. glanced upwards at his illustrious ancestors, briefly communed with them, then nodded.

"Show me where they are on the plan, please. I want to be sure of seeing and hearing everything."

The manager pointed, and averred through tight lips that if he personally had freedom of choice he'd plump for those two every time.

"There's an extra five shillings on each," he warned, taking our circle tickets but holding on to the pass to the stalls.

"What? That seems rather a lot to pay for so far back."

The pillow'd head let out a tiny scream and promptly stuffed it into the handkerchief. The H. M. cast an agonized glance over his shoulder then confirmed the accuracy of his calculation.

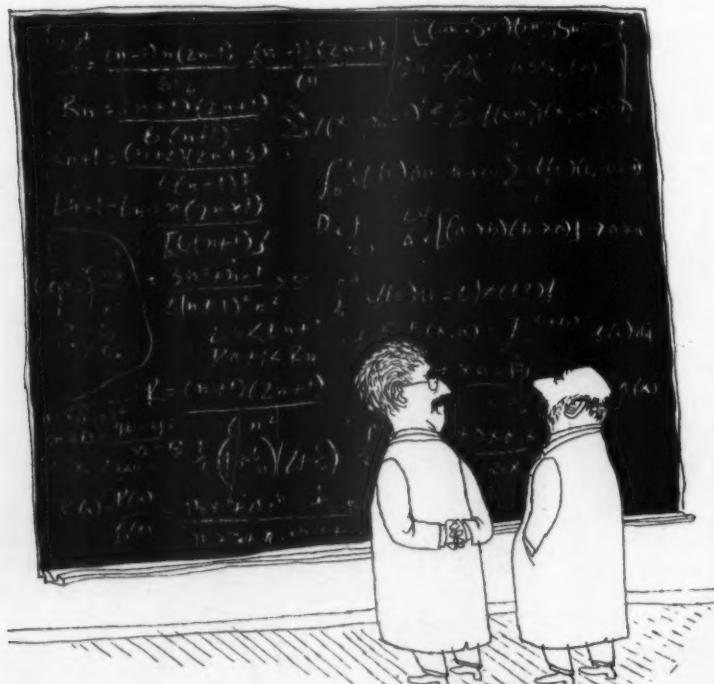
"Oh, there you are," my aunt smiled brightly, advancing towards me, so that I was obliged to resume publicly our relationship, "I wondered where you'd got to. We're in the Stalls now—not exactly what I would have liked, but they're better than those awful seats in the Dress Circle. We'd better hurry or the curtain'll be up."

My last check with the foyer clock showed the performance had been on seven minutes as we dived through the velvet draperies.

She didn't seem to notice that we'd already missed the murder and most of the vital clues. Nor, apparently, that we were destined to stand at the back, behind row Eb, for the rest of the act. It crossed my mind as I vainly tried to get abreast of events on the stage that murder was also the probable theme of conversation in the box-office as they balanced up.

In the first interval we moved to our centre gangway seats. Aunt Emily sat down and looked around the auditorium with the composure of complete satisfaction.

"You know, dear, these theatre people always do find what you want in the end, if you stand your ground," she said.



"Of course if $\int_{\nu}^{\infty} u^4 du = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \sum_{i=1}^n \left(\frac{i}{n}\right)^4 \cdot \frac{x}{n}$, we're sunk."

Essence of Parliament

THE Mayor of the French city of Aromas has found himself faced with a peculiar problem. In France lunacy is no disqualification for the municipal franchise. In Aromas there is a large and flourishing lunatic asylum, and the Mayor has discovered that after for a time running a neck-and-neck race with all the vigour of American Presidential candidates, the lunatics have forged ahead and established a clear majority for themselves among the electorate over the non-lunatics. There are times when one wonders if the situation is very different at Westminster. The Socialists chose to debate rents, it being almost the only subject on which they are agreed among themselves, and at the end of the debate Mr. George Brown boldly claimed that it could no longer be said that the Socialist party was an ineffective opposition. No one could blame him for saying it. Poor man, he had to say something, but at the same time no one could seriously be expected to believe it. For everyone knows that the Socialists talk about rents because they do not dare to talk about defence, and the trouble about their reluctance to talk about defence is that the Government is getting away with murder—or perhaps one should rather say with suicide. The Government can complacently claim that it has a policy which can defend the country, and the Socialists do not dare to deny it. Mr. Watkinson can defend his policy in the Commons in the afternoon and then go down into the country the same evening to make a public speech saying that he has given up all hope of it working. That is odd enough in itself, but what is even odder is that he can do that without one cheep of criticism from the Opposition benches. He can admit that the Government no longer has a hope of raising the forces which a few months ago he asserted were essential if we were to fulfil our commitments, and no Socialist even dares to ask him what are the commitments which he is not proposing to fulfil.

Again the Socialists ask for a debate on the enormously important question of the nation's inadequate investments, and when the Chancellor rises to open the debate there are about a dozen Socialists present on the yawning Opposition benches

Looking for a Formula to hear him. The rest are upstairs in a committee room, having a row about Polaris, concerned not indeed to discover a policy that makes sense but to discover a formula which they can repeat without appearing to quarrel with one another more bitterly than they have already.

They left it to Conservatives to criticize the Government—to Mr. Ridsdale, to Mr. Shepherd and to Mr. Maurice Macmillan. Mr. Hamilton of Fife had some pawky little comments to make on "the Macmillan Labour Exchange," on the number of relatives of the Prime Minister who get given jobs. He did not reflect that one of the jobs that might go to a Macmillan before things were finished was that of Leader of the Opposition. Aromas, to be sure, has little on Westminster.

To be just, the investment debate did a bit better on Thursday. There was an admirably vigorous speech on the philosophic plane from Mr. Roy Jenkins, asking what sort of a society do we want to have? Mr. Jenkins was careful to explain that he was not concerned to make party points, and indeed the explanation was justified. For he attributed our troubles to the "national sluggishness" from which we had suffered not merely since 1951 but since the 1930s. He was pungent in his criticism of the Conservatives, but apparently he has given up pretending that the Labour party still exists, which is probably as sensible a line as any. His remedy was that we should join the Six and go into Europe—a remedy for which the Socialists have shown even less enthusiasm than the Conservatives.

The one thing that is certain about Mr. Butler is that, like Alexander Pope, he never does anything without a stratagem. Therefore when we find him taking a markedly different line

Never without a Stratagem towards the divisions of the Socialists from that taken either by the best Prime Minister we have or by any of his other colleagues we can be sure that there is a reason for his tactics, little as we may be able to guess what that reason may be. Mr. Macmillan's technique has been to throw an occasional careless phrase of amused contempt at the Opposition benches but for the most part to ignore their existence and to leave them alone.

Mr. George Brown tried to taunt him with the accusation that his answers were calculated to unite the maximum of opposition against him, but there is a limit even to Mr. Macmillan's powers, and there is indeed little sign, if that be his purpose, that he is achieving it. Mr. Butler, on the other hand, went out of his way to infuriate the Opposition by congratulating Mr. Gaitskell on his victories and adding that a "victory for sanity" must of its nature be a "victory against

Socialism." This taunt naturally caused the maximum of fury to the left-wing Socialists and the maximum of embarrassment to the right wing—which was the object of the exercise. But Home Secretaries who live in glass houses should not throw stones, and even Homer nodded at times at the boredom of his own speech. Arguing that the Government's policy on rents would in the end prove successful he used the unfortunate cliché that it would "in the end pay dividends." The Socialists howled with delight. How long a time it is since they have had a chance to howl at anyone except one of their own leaders!

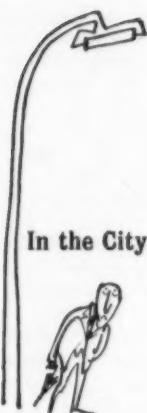
Mr. Julian Amery, making his debut as Secretary for Air, had to reply to questions about the Queen's near-miss on her return from Copenhagen. He was not very happy at doing so. He did not know the precise significance of the word "Buzz." Nor for the matter of that did Hamlet. But Mr. Amery did not seem to know the precise significance of a good deal else either. Question-time in general is running into a vicious circle these days. Ministers make longer and longer answers. Their questioners ask longer and longer supplementaries. Other Members complain on points of order, and the Speaker again and again patiently explains that he has every sympathy with the complaints but that the raising of them only makes progress slower still. The only remedy is that, like Topham Beauclerk's children reciting to Dr. Johnson, Members should all ask all their questions together. "Nay, let the poor dears speak all together. More noise will be made that way and the noise will be sooner ended."

In the Upper House Lord Morrison of Lambeth thought that science would at last be justified if it could find a way of making motor bicycles less noisy.

—PERCY SOMERSET



MR. JULIAN AMERY



In the City

Kennedy's Dollar

THE news of Mr. Kennedy's victory was significantly heralded by the announcement that the United States had just lost \$175 million of gold in a single day—probably the largest day's exodus from any one country's gold reserve. The two events were obviously connected. It was the expectation of a Democratic victory and of what it might entail for economic policy in the United States which led to the flight from the dollar into gold, which has recently enlivened (and enriched) the bullion market.

When the fear or—according to political conviction—the hope had been realized, the pressure on the dollar and the drain on the U.S. reserve continued. It was bound to do so. The Democratic party is by tradition the "easy money" party. The promises Mr. Kennedy has made during his campaign, many of which must be fulfilled, will add considerably to the budget.

The disquiet for the dollar conjured up by these ruminations will be increased by the oddities of a constitution, devised in the days of the "covered wagon," which demands an interval of several weeks between the election of a President and his assumption of office. During this vacuum of power and responsibility mischief can run wild—as it did early in 1933 when, before Mr. Roosevelt took over, the whole credit system of the United States ground to a halt and the dollar was brought to the point at which a severe amputation of its value had to be carried through.

There is no close parallel between the era of the Great Depression and the 1960s. The dollar can and will be defended. But the longer term prospect for it must be clouded in some uncertainty—hence the continuing demand for gold itself and the boom in gold mining

shares with which the Kennedy victory was greeted in the London Stock Exchange—a boom announced from Lombard Lane some weeks ago.

The portents of this victory must be expansionist. It will cut short the modest recession in trade and industrial production which has been creeping over parts of the free world. It changes the course of economic development a few degrees nearer to inflation. Though there will be serious reservations as to what this may betoken, it must be regarded as a bull point for equities in general.

It may take time for deep-dyed Republican Wall Street to realize this and drown its political sorrows in another speculative spree. Meanwhile the best investment course in Britain is to stick to the shares that have shown themselves able to stand up to the erratic

twists and turns of markets this year. The best of these defensive stocks have been retail stores to whose performance another great testimonial has just been given by the results of Marks & Spencer for the first half of the financial year.

Retail sales are keeping up well but the trend is still away from the little shop round the corner and in favour of the big chain stores. Among these there is no doubt about the progress that is still being made by Marks & Spencer. The latest figures show a further 17 per cent increase in turnover and a stepping up of the interim dividend from 12½ to 15 per cent. Marks & Spencer are often referred to as "the best managed firm in the country." Whatever doubts there may be concerning this superlative, it would certainly be difficult to find a company with a more persistent record of growth. — LOMBARD LANE

* * *



In the Country

Elms—and Disease

ELMS can be lofty enough. They have achieved the greatest heights (over one hundred and fifty feet) of any of our indigenous trees. In another sense they normally rank as lowly or plebeian—at least when compared with such patrician trees as oak and ash. There is that treacherous dropping of branches. And the timber, though formerly used for water-mains and still for coffins, tends to warp abnormally and is not, judged all round, much good. (When I worked in an estate timberyard we used to saw elm boards to repair pig-styes. Of course they went into the creosote tank to preserve the timber and also to make them unpalatable to pigs—liable to gnaw their prisons when hungry.) Still, with all that, a commentator who once deprecated elms for their "sluttish" habit of dropping leaves around was

perhaps pushing that unkind class-consciousness or hierarchy-of-trees idea a little far.

Elms can be picturesque and they make stately avenues. Their gold, just before the descent into vulgar litter, is as fine as any in the landscape. The numerous casualties caused by the "new" elm disease between 1928 and 1938 were widely deplored. Now the Forestry Commission has produced an interesting ten-bob bulletin, a scientific study of the status and development of the disease (which is by no means over)—by T. R. Peace.

Briefly, though thousands of stricken elms have died in the last thirty years the actual proportion lost will probably be only 10 to 20 per cent. And this can readily be made good by saving young sucker elms in hedges. The disease is not now so deadly as it was but may long continue to be a minor nuisance. There isn't much that we can effectively do about it, except abstain from leaving diseased branches or sawn firewood lying around to harbour the beetles which spread the pathogen—a fungal infection. (When the disease was first noticed in Picardy in 1918 it was attributed to poison gas or some other effect of the 1914-18 war.)

Anyone thinking of starting, from scratch, to do a little elm-watching or some recognition exercises should be warned in advance that the genus is "difficult." There are far more species than just wych elms, common English elms, Dutch, Cornish, Huntingdon and Jersey elms. There are also almost infinite numbers of hybrids—possibly the result of "sluttish" promiscuity?

— J. D. U. WARD



"Saved us a fortune in trick photography."

criticism



AT THE PLAY

She Stoops to Conquer (OLD VIC)
Toys in the Attic (PICCADILLY)

IN a note in the programme at the Old Vic Douglas Seale admits he has always thought of *She Stoops to Conquer* as being nearer Ben Travers than Ben Jonson, and says he was encouraged in this view when he found that Tony Lumpkin was originally intended to be played by Woodward, the clown. Thus his production is a light-hearted romp that has no unity of style but justifies itself, I think, by being very entertaining. I would rather see the play done as it was at the New in '49 on classical lines, but near-farcical treatment is probably better suited to the capacities of the present Old Vic cast.

Peggy Mount as Mrs. Hardcastle is a vulgarian of tremendous voltage, and very funny; the only trouble is that one cannot imagine that Nicholas Meredith's fastidious old squire would ever have married her. John Humphry plays Marlow with a slight stammer (legacy from Michael Redgrave?) and a great air of gentlemanly insolence, that melts amusingly while he believes Kate

to be the barmaid. Their scene together in the drawing-room would have passed muster at the Aldwych in the old days; Judi Dench is a nimble, kittenish Kate who makes the very most of his delusion. I think this is easily her best performance so far. Michael Meacham makes a useful Hastings, and Ann Bell's Constance is closer to the period than any in the cast except the two young men.

But perhaps the most interesting thing in this production is the success of Tommy Steele as Tony Lumpkin. He is much to be admired for the pains he is taking to learn straight acting as an escape from pop-singing, and there is no doubt he is a natural comedian, not yet in complete control of himself but with abundant vitality and an engaging manner.

The production is decorated by Osbert Lancaster, who gives the Hardcastle home an enviable Georgian front and a pleasing if draughty interior.

I was disappointed by *Toys in the Attic*, which I thought a pretentious play about very dreary people, although it has had a drama critics' award in New York. It has

REP SELECTION

Library, Manchester, *As You Like It*, until December 3.
Belgrave, Coventry, *One Way Pendulum*, until November 26.
Little, Bristol, *The Ring of Truth*, until November 26.
Dundee Rep, *The Unexpected Guest*, until November 26.

no spark of humour to leaven the rarefied solemnity of its story of moral and mental violence in New Orleans, a town which, against all the accumulating evidence of modern American playwrights, must contain a few honest characters tucked away in some forgotten corner. If it had been produced as melodrama, which seems to be its true level, it would not have been so emotionally dead; as it is its characters are so unreal, in spite of good acting, that they had no more effect on me than cases in a psychiatrist's textbook. Probably an American cast would have given the play more meaning.

Incest, hatred and jealousy ferment in its decaying family under a heavy air of spurious mystery which is only slowly unveiled as the evening goes on. The two middle-aged spinster sisters, who live for a flashy cad of a brother, are saving up for a trip to Europe which they know will never happen. The brother returns, suspiciously rich, to shower them with presents; he brings with him his doll wife, who goes about habitually in a nightdress and bare feet, Ophelia without the herbs. Her childhood has been messed about by a mother who is living with her black chauffeur. It turns out that the brother's fortune is based on two acres of swamp wanted by a railway, about which he has had prior information from an old girlfriend, who is the wife of the man he has put on the spot for the money. The jealous little wife telephones this man to tell him her husband is helping his wife to leave him, and thugs are dispatched to beat the couple up and steal the money. Just before this happens the elder sister accuses the younger one of being incestuously in love with her brother, and there we gratefully leave them, a not very happy family, to get along as best they can.

Is New Orleans really such a psychiatrist's paradise? The English cast does its utmost to make it real. Wendy Hiller and Diana Wynyard as the sisters, Ian Bannen as the brother and Coral Browne as the girl's mother all give skilful performances. It is very hard to point a fault, except that English accents come oddly in such freak behaviour. The solemnity of John Dexter's



Tony Lumpkin—TOMMY STEELE

[*She Stoops to Conquer*

production was presumably in line with the author's wishes.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The Playboy of the Western World (St. Martin's—19/10/60), excellent revival from Dublin. *The Caretaker* (Duchess—11/5/60), Pinter's exciting play. *Oliver!* (New—6/7/60), lively musical from Dickens.

— ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

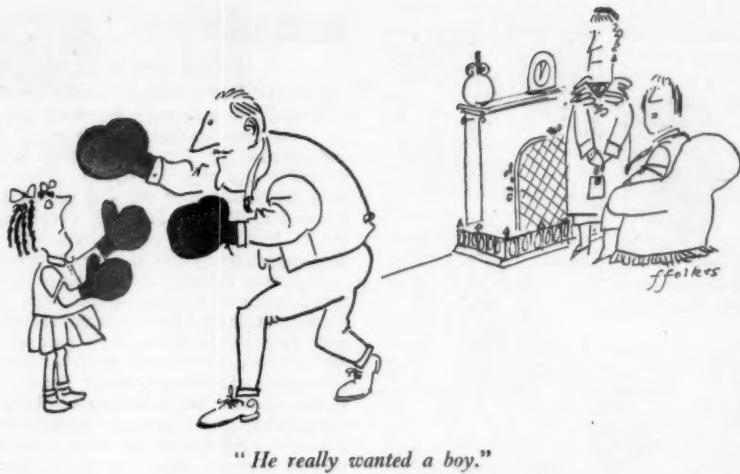
Man in the Moon

Portrait in Black

AS I suppose was only to be expected, the new outfit called Allied Film Makers, which began well with *The League of Gentlemen*, proceeds not with something better but with something more popular. And so in *Man in the Moon* (Director: Basil Dearden) we have a characteristically British satirical comedy, firing good-natured darts at all the immemorially bristling targets—bureaucracy, scientists, the weather, psychiatry, railways and the rest—that everybody now knows it's correct to laugh at. There are unconventionally good moments and fresh ideas, but they are introduced unobtrusively so that the lowbrow, if he notices them at all, won't be upset; and it is nearly all good and loud, so that no effort is needed to pay attention. Because of the enormous cost of making any kind of film, the tendency towards commercial popularization is almost inevitable, but I'm always saddened by the sight of it in action.

The key to this piece is that it was plainly calculated to fit popular ideas. All the characters are, according to their jobs and functions, exactly the sort of people everybody would expect them to be—a trifle emphasized to make the effect certain. William (surname Blood, to give opportunity for puns), who is chosen to make the "pathfinder" journey to the moon, is a Kenneth More hero-type just a bit more gay and facetious, a bit more dashing and resilient, talking just a bit more loudly than usual, and the people he has to deal with are first "typical" bureaucrats who behave and speak as absurdly as all such officials are popularly believed to behave and speak, and then "typical" scientists, including (of course) an absurd psychiatrist.

William is chosen because of his unique immunity from all the ills of ordinary men, and there are amusing passages in the account of his training (some near-slapstick here) and the jealousy among the team of muscular and intellectual supermen who had assumed, till his arrival, that one of them would have the honour of being first on the moon. But the best moments are quite incidental, and I detected all the time the influence of that determination to emphasize, that working rule which goes somewhat to this effect: "Make it a bit more obvious and then even the boneheads will understand—better lose a few intellectuals than a lot of boneheads."



But there are, by the way, some unemphasized effects showing evidence of great care and ingenuity. They are elaborate double meanings in the dialogue. The lesson of the really big British box-office successes has plainly been learnt.

Portrait in Black (Director: Michael Gordon) is a strong murder drama, school of *Double Indemnity*, made with extreme skill and professionalism: a highly moral work, but so positively so as to seem in places almost comic. It might be an unusually star-studded item in a Crime Does Not Pay series.

The trouble is that—in places—people are called on to behave not in accordance with character and probability but to fit the arranged plot, which needs such-and-such an emotion or action or dialogue revelation at that particular point. When such obviously artificial moments are strongly emphasized, as several of them are here, they become laughable rather than impressive.

Basically the story is about the way one murder leads to another and eventual nemesis. Dr. Rivera (Anthony Quinn) is in love with the wife (Lana Turner) of a bedridden shipping tycoon (Lloyd Nolan), who takes great trouble to be unpleasant to her and is duly murdered by the guilty pair. Then an anonymous letter indicates that someone knows, and that leads to the elimination of the next most unsympathetic character on suspicion . . . And so on, to the surprise ending. Mr. Quinn and the others do all that could be done with the piece as written; but scenes (for instance) demanding that passionate feelings of fear or hate or anger shall be worked up in a minute or two from nothing, in a few lines of dialogue, sometimes appear ludicrously mechanical. The extreme glossiness of the production, and the fact that it is in colour, also seem wrong. This is one in which the technique, in itself excellent, is so out of keeping with the content that the result as a whole is a failure.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Of the London films, I'd still mention *Shadows* (27/7/60 and 26/10/60) first. Others worth noting are highly miscellaneous: *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (9/11/60), *Black Orpheus* (8/6/60), *Jazz on a Summer's Day* (28/9/60), *The Millionairess* (2/11/60), *Can-Can* (30/3/60). *Jungle Cat* ("Survey," 9/11/60) has splendid animal pictures, and *The Alamo* (9/11/60) is a finely spectacular Western bloated with words and a fifteen-minute interval to three and a half hours.

The Millionairess (90 mins.) is also among the releases. Others are *Village of the Damned* (29/6/60—77 mins.), fatuous title for an enjoyable version of John Wyndham's *The Midwich Cuckoos*, and *Surprise Package* (5/10/60—99 mins.), wisecracking comedy.

— RICHARD MALLETT

AT THE GALLERY

Drawing Optional

THE above words, taken from an old preparatory school prospectus, can now, almost unbelievably, be used to describe the state of modern art. You can, as a contemporary, get away with little drawing, or drawing like an ape which of course means no drawings at all. This does not apply to the artists in the Leeds Drawings and Water Colours Exhibition at Agnews and the French artists at the Reid Gallery. For them the age-old art of humanist drawing is a matter of prime necessity and passion.

The Agnew Exhibition is dominated by the English nineteenth-century water colourists comprising works by Cotman, de Wint, Girtin and Constable, with a few more recent ones; while the second show, which follows on agreeably from it, is a small collection which includes a fine group of little Boudin water colours, an amusing trifle by Picasso in coloured chalks, a



"Did you remember the salt, dear?"

Matisse of a face which perfectly decorates a piece of paper with a few lines, and an amazingly facile sketch of a head of a child by Van Dongen—that disturbing artist who so often seems to wish to degrade his own talent.

My own choice was for a Segonzac of a Venus on a terrace in rural France expressed in the artist's very sympathetic shorthand. This I should have to include in any "desert island drawings collection" of mine. It would not be quite my first choice, as that would be for one of the Leeds Cotmans. No artist conveys such a sense of peace so lucidly or with such natural elegance as Cotman does, particularly when he is interpreting his native East Anglian landscape. There is, however, much other treasure in both exhibitions including, at Agnews, landscape drawings by Francis Towne (1740-1816), and an Augustus John drawing of superb quality, while at the Reid Gallery we are asked to reassess the once fashionable Helleu.

Water Colours from Leeds City Art Gallery, Agnews, 43 Old Bond Street, closes November 19.

French Masters of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Reid Gallery, 23 Cork Street, W.1, closes November 19.

—ADRIAN DAINTRY

PUNCH EXHIBITIONS

"Punch in the Theatre." Royal Festival Hall.

A window display of some of the drawings that won *Punch* the silver cup at the XIII Salone Internazionale dell'Umorismo is now on show at the Italian State Tourist Office, 201 Regent Street, London, W.1.

ON THE AIR

Most Kindest Cuts

ALTHOUGH I doubted at the opening bell that there would be world enough and time, here we are, still on our feet and coming up for the fifteenth round with *The Age of Kings* (BBC). They left us a fortnight ago at the end of Act III, Scene I of *Richard III* with Crookback's pot of blood nicely on the boil and his come-uppance to relish in the next episode.

The many passages of this pageant of history I have witnessed have all been very well produced, colourfully yet unfussily mounted, and have had a nice, brisk pace about the butchery which has held the interest throughout each Shakespearean hour. The cutting of these kingly dramas has been to the general good, removing padding that has ever been tedious in the theatre and thereby revealing more clearly the poetry and the true play. There was a neat example of this improving compression in the handling of Clarence's death-scene in the last programme when most of the vacillation of the murderers was omitted and we moved quickly from the beauty of the dream-speech to the pathos of the butt of malmsey.

It is interesting to watch how readily these surgical excisions can be made in some scenes whereas in others the lines of Shakespeare come straight to the TV script as though they were written expressly for the medium. This modern quality was stressed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, the producer of the film version of *Julius Caesar*, in a recent television interview when he revealed that, in filming Caesar's progress to the Capitol before his assassination, he had used the original text of Shakespeare, untouched, as his shooting script.

Dickens, of course, also has this televisual touch and, with the exception of *Our Mutual Friend*, whose complications drove me from the set, all the adaptations of his works so far have been on the side of success. *Barnaby Rudge* (BBC) is now at the half-way stage and has already shown the prospects of being another winner. The serial play, like the book, is rather unrewarding for the good people involved and they have little to do but to behave uprightly and to express surprise at the turns of mystery. The plums, as usual in Dickens, go to the villains and the light relief. A wonderful time is being had by all on the shady side but I think that Raymond Huntley as John Chester and Joan Hickson as Mrs. Varden are offering outstanding performances in true, rich Dickensian style. Timothy Bateson is building a fine, fantastical Tapertit and Barbara Hicks is delightfully comic as Miss Miggs. Even if you've missed the first seven episodes and aren't sure about the story line, the last six should be worth your while just to watch the sheer professional ability of these four players.

The new eponymous series *Somerset*

Maugham Hour (A-R) went off to a good start with *The Four Dutchmen*, a play about the havoc that can be wreaked in a happy ship when the captain fancies a teenage wahine. A story of four fat sailor-friends and a middle-aged man moaning over a girl is tricky material to handle and there lurks within it the ever-present danger of slipping from drama into bathos. An excellent performance by Guy Deghy as the captain made the passion and the agony of the central character believable and provided a pillar of reality around which the action could convincingly be built. The support was consistently good and Julie Allen played well the difficult part of Suthami, the native girl; since Tondeleyo these white-man's-ruin roles always come perilously near to theatrical satire.

The series will do well to maintain the standard of this opening number and I hope that ensuing episodes find more employment for Hugh Williams. Although he was billed as the star and played Mallowby, the Maugham teller of stories,

PUNCH ALMANACK 1961

The Almanack is now on sale at 2/6d. Postal subscribers will receive a copy without application; other readers are advised to ask their newsagents to reserve a copy for them. Copies can be posted to friends overseas for 3/- each, post paid.

he had, in practice, little to do but set the scene and his part made no real contribution to the action. In fact his interventions with odd historical comment merely served, as do the advertisements, to break the spell of the play. What little he was asked to do he did, as always, impeccably, and I hope that the future brings fuller use of his talents.

I have enjoyed the BBC's innovation this autumn of television hosts and hostesses who slip in for a chat between programmes and tell us about the treats in store. One of their emergency functions seems to be the filling of unforeseen gaps which sometimes occur when programmes finish before schedule. They each seem to have their own pleasant and decorative way of doing this but I must give the award for economy of effort to the charming hostess who came on one evening during the full reach of the floods and said "We have a minute or two to spare before the next programme and perhaps you'd like to have another look at the weather chart for to-morrow." And she left us sitting there for what certainly seemed a minute or two all right looking at that little hummocked map of Great Britain with "Heavy Rain and Thundery Outbreaks in All Parts" written all over it. I bet she went down with a rare swing around Lewes and along the valley of the Medway. —PATRICK RYAN

BOOKING OFFICE

SOAP AND FISH

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

Lord of the Isles. Nigel Nicolson. *Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 30/-*

THAT industrialists of great drive and wealth should turn in their later years to grandiose acts of benefaction is almost a golden rule. Sometimes they turn to good works because they become bored with making money and now seek only ways of spending it, sometimes because their massive worldly success engenders feelings of guilt, sometimes because through long experience of red tape they have become impatient with the crawl of social progress as expressed through the democratic will, and sometimes—but uncommonly—because they have planned it so.

With most millionaires charity begins at home and moves abroad only when every drawer is stuffed to overflowing.

The trouble with monumental acts of public benefaction is that they are apt to crumble through imperfections of spadework and stone-laying and because the benefactor has defied the democratic process and taken the law into his own hands. In capitalist societies such failures are always regarded sympathetically. They are noble. But this is because we do not understand the real cost of these ventures, the appalling waste of skill and material and labour, the alternatives of which we are thereby deprived, the shattered hopes of the thousands of people involved.

Lord Leverhulme's colossal flop in the Hebrides immediately after the first world war is the case in point. "If Leverhulme could revisit Lewis and Harris in the 1960s," writes Nigel Nicolson in his valediction, "he would claim that present conditions justify his argument. Perhaps the task he set himself was for political and economic reasons impossible. Nobody has yet solved the problem he faced. But few would deny the humanity of his vision as he expressed it in January 1918 . . ." True: but the cost. In hard cash something between £2 million and £5 million; in wasted resources and the disillusionment of thousands a shocking disaster.

Leverhulme bought Lewis, an island of 400,000 acres and 30,000 people, when it was advertised in *The Times*. The purchase price, after hard bargaining, was £143,000, and the money came out of the soap king's own pocket, not out of the funds of Lever Bros. of which Leverhulme was boss. He intended to convert the undeveloped island into a thriving industrial centre based on fish. In the coastal waters there were riches waiting to be taken; the markets for herrings and herring products were wide open; there was money to be made—for all concerned. All he had to do was pump in capital for canneries, harbour installations, roads, houses and so on, and the poor and backward crofters would become hard-working and relatively prosperous factory hands (like his employees at Port Sunlight), fishermen, farmers and engineers. But inevitably there were snags; and Nigel Nicolson's brilliant documentary is the story of the human, physical, financial and economic problems which in the end ruined the master plan. The crofters could not be

budged, Stornoway was handicapped by its distance from the railheads, the Eastern markets for herring dried up, the Scottish office was unco-operative, Lever Bros.' ventures in Africa (Nigeria and the Congo) and depression at home rocked the boat of Leverhulme's and the company's fortunes and forced him at a critical moment to lower his sails. In the end very little was accomplished (MacFisheries is the only tangible outcome of the experiment), the islands reverted to apathy and indolence and Leverhulme died a disappointed and disillusioned man.

This is a wonderfully absorbing slice of industrial history—history based on research in depth and told with vigour and eloquent clarity. The title of the book is a story in itself. In 1922 Leverhulme was created a viscount and took the title "Viscount Leverhulme of the Western Isles in the counties of Inverness and Ross and Cromarty." There was an immediate outcry. He had affronted Highland sentiment. The title was said to resemble too closely the proud designation "Lord of the Isles" originally held by the head of the Clan Donald, and since the sixteenth century by the Prince of Wales. There were ructions, but in this matter the "old soapman" stood firm.

NEW NOVELS

The Sovereigns. Roger Vailland (translated by Peter Wiles). *Cape, 16/-*

The Barbed Wire Fence. Loys Masson (translated by Denise Folliot). *Chatto and Windus, 18/-*

Don't Tell Alfred. Nancy Mitford. *Hamish Hamilton, 15/-*

Tiara Tahiti. Geoffrey Cottrell. *Eyre and Spottiswoode, 18/-*

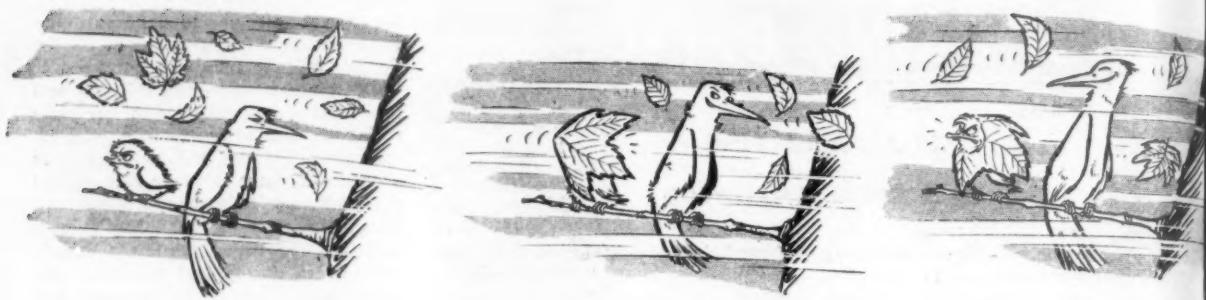
There used to be a time when there were novelist's novelists—writers, that is, whose concern with the technique of fiction was so intense that all their literary colleagues quailed before their sheer accomplishment. In these parlous times, one can think of very few of the breed. M. Vailland is one. His new novel, *The Sovereigns*, is about a writer named Duc who is stalled in the middle of a novel about *l'amour fou*. He interrupts his work to have a love-affair with the wife of a fellow-writer. The affair is both a celebration and a discovery; he is able to place himself in history, and to command himself—to be a sovereign over his own past. And as the novel ends he sits down to write another novel, one that tells the truth, one that sticks to reality. He begins to write—and what he writes is the first paragraph of the present novel.

M. Vailland succeeds, within this circular motion, in presenting themes not only about the writer's way of working but also about the precise relation of



2—DONALD BAERSTOCK

Producer of BBC's television programme
"Tonight"



man to his world. He is a stickler for detail. When his hero drives a car we always know what gear he is in. He unravels motives and values with a biologist's care. The writer's mastering of his history—his way of getting to the truth—is a paradigm for his view of man as a creature who needs to bare his own roots. *The Sovereigns* is a most accomplished book, but its accomplishment comes finally from an incredible efficiency on the part of its creator, from a perfection of technique. One does not, for all the detail and exactness, feel that one has gone very far into life. The book says nothing about morals or about love—it simply defines how a novelist of a certain sort sees morals or love, sees what determines them, sees how to depict them.

The Barbed Wire Fence is concealed science fiction. It tells how a group of American convicts—twenty-five men, twenty-five women—are put on a desert island and subjected to an atomic blast. They are then allowed to make love so that scientists can observe what monsters the union produces. It is a grim tale, told in rich and clotted prose, a prose that takes some of the edge off the fable by its permanent tone of tension, by its fondness for grim forebodings. The narrator, one of the prisoners, is a Kafkaesque victim of this supreme cruelty. At times the hysteria of his idiom is necessary to comprehend the hideous fate that science has decreed for him; at other moments it is simply hysteria.

Miss Mitford's new book, *Don't Tell Alfred*, is very smart and amusing. Fanny Wincham's husband, Alfred, has been rather improbably transferred from his Chair of Pastoral Theology at Oxford to be Ambassador in Paris. In this tweed Lady Diana Cooper world, Fanny has her social triumphs and her difficulties, the difficulties being largely with the younger generation. The business of government is very much in the background—after all, there is so much on when a woman has a son who is a teddy boy, another who is a Zen Buddhist, and two more who run away from Eton to pack electric shavers at nine pounds a week. To me Miss Mitford never quite succeeds in pulling off her comic effects because she hasn't any real scale of values to judge things against. The conflict of old standards against young ones could be so much more fascinating if Fanny Wincham had any larger standards herself

than that some things are amusing and others a bore.

Geoffrey Cottrell's new novel is dominated by the luxurious local colour of Tahiti, and this, no doubt, is how he wanted it. *Tiara Tahiti* is a very competent job of bookmaking, with good characters, an efficient plot, and lots and lots of tropical background. Those who enjoy their ingredients mixed in this way will certainly enjoy this book. — MALCOLM BRADBURY

YULE-TIDE GIFTES

A Book of Pleasures. John Hadfield. Vista Books, 28/-

Merry England. Cyril Ray. Vista Books, 25/-

The Compleat Imbiber. Edited by Cyril Ray. Putnam, 25/-

These three volumes all come under the category known to the trade as "gift-books." But who on earth, one wonders, gives them to whom? Both format and contents are governed by certain conventions: broadly speaking, a gift-book must be prettily got up, intellectually light-weight (though not too lowbrow), lavishly illustrated and preferably mildly humorous. The tradition harks back to the "Keepsakes" of the early nineteenth century, though—like folk-dancing—it is discontinuous; the revival began about thirty years ago, and was initiated (if this reviewer's memory can be trusted) by the *New Forget-me-not*, published by Cobden Sanderson in 1929. The same year, significantly, saw the first big-scale revival, at the music-halls, of pre-(first)war tunes such as "A Bicycle made for Two," etc.; the Age of Nostalgia had set in.

"Whatever shall we give Aunt Gladys this Christmas?" "How about some hankies?" "No, we gave her those last year." "I know—a nice book." But one's elderly aunts, if they read at all, have probably got around to Angus (or even Colin) Wilson by now; and one suspects that these modern Keepsakes, having littered the lounge for a week or two, will land up—if the kiddies or the Corgis haven't torn them to bits—in the waiting-rooms of the more cultured kind of dentist. Perhaps that's what they are really meant for.

Mr. Hadfield has, as usual, dug out some charming and little-known pictures: *Marie Tempest* by Jacques-Emile Blanche, and the horses of Saint Mark's by Sickert (with

a quotation from *The Stones of Venice*—what would Ruskin have made of him?). On the whole the text doesn't lag too far behind the plates, though some of Mr. Hadfield's choices seem a bit obvious.

Mr. Cyril Ray, like Mr. Mercaptan before him, is an admirable composer of "delicious middles," and *Merry England* is a representative collection, illustrated by Edward Ardizzone. There is an odd piece about small ads in Shepherd Market ("French lessons by Miss Flogg, 42, 24, 36"), and "The Man of Pleasure's Illustrated Pocket Book (1850)," which had a flap at the back for addresses. Cricketers, on the other hand, will not relish his description of Canterbury Cricket Week and the "baked-bean belt round the Cathedral"; frightfully unpukka. Can it be that Cyril Ray is a mere *nom de guerre* for Hewlett Johnson?

The Compleat Imbiber is an annual subsidized by Gilbey's; it might be described as the best kind of neo-saloon-bar cultural gimmick. Contributors include such distinguished toppers as Priestley, Postgate, Robin McDouall, etc., with the Movement—Elizabeth Jennings—thrown in for good measure; it is surely symptomatic of the "wind of change" (or something) that boozing should have become a highbrow (or upper middle-brow) cult. How one would like to see all these ladies and gentlemen together in a real pub: what would Priestley and McDouall talk about? Or Postgate and Miss Jennings? Probably their respective royalties . . .

Anyway, if you choose the right sort of dentist, these books should prove suitably analgesic.

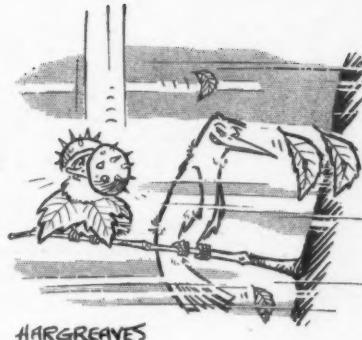
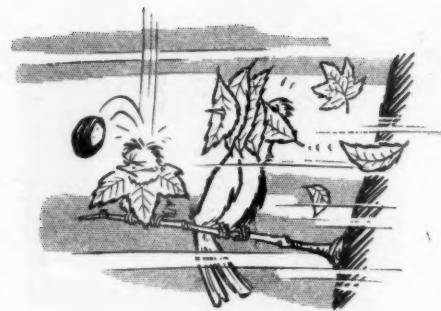
— JOCELYN BROOKE

HANDS ACROSS THE CURTAIN

Russia Has Two Faces. Eileen Bigland. Odhams, 21/-

Russians as People. Wright Miller. Phoenix House, 25/-

The Russian people are much liked by foreign visitors, and especially by the English. Indeed, many Russians look rather English, have a similar sense of humour, and make it hard for us to realize just how far they differ from ourselves. They differ intensely, and Russia, like its inhabitants, remains a mystery. The language is perplexing, the tourist who suddenly finds himself in Leningrad or Moscow cannot (as in other countries) absorb part of its essence in the first ten



HARGREAVES

minutes. "He is baffled again and again by a subdued or characterless exterior, of scenery, of people, of buildings, and of behaviour, which one must suspect conceals a life to which one cannot find the key . . ." Russia, as Sir Winston Churchill observed on another occasion, is a riddle wrapped in a mystery enveloped in an enigma.

The two latest Western visitors to try and solve the mystery are Mrs. Bigland and Mr. Wright Miller. Mrs. Bigland returned apprehensively, in 1958, after an interval of twenty-two years. Mr. Miller spent two and a half years living in the Union, on various occasions between 1934 and 1960. Both authors travelled widely in Russia, both of them considered that people were more important than places, and both were affectionately determined to get underneath the Russian skin.

But that is nearly all they have in common. Mrs. Bigland sounds (I hate to say it) like a woman's magazine, gilding over her facts with sentiment, and showing no sense whatever of style. She does not seem, as the Russians said, altogether *kulturny*. Mr. Miller has a style of his own, and his affection for Russia does not prevent him from making an honest, vigorous assessment of morals, manners, taste and politics. Since he is not only frank, but enjoys a rewarding visual sense, he also gives us a series of clear vignettes of Russia: before the uniform streets of modern Russia he puts the ancient and timeless Russia: the frozen horses dragging their sledges, the gold onion-domes of the churches, the watchmen in their long cloaks. He gives us a readable and enlightening impression.

— JOANNA RICHARDSON

TRULY RURAL

The Wicked Village. Donald McCormick. *Jarrold*, 21/-

Mostly small beer about an imaginary Sussex village that Mr. McCormick has dreamt up to house his own—real—converted oast-house home, but with an occasional and welcome draught of the rich October ale from "The Merry Damsel" for an enlivener.

A splendid pub "The Merry Damsel," accommodating an enormous circular bed

presented to a co-operative young lady of Restoration days whose lustful ways gave rise to the local refrain "Us be proper wicked down in Codgem"—an attitude rather of wilful memory than modern practice. Even if you look for Codham by road the "delicate and leisurely strip-tease act" by which it makes its presence known is a very modest affair of country innocence compounded with a mere dash of rustic guile. And don't be alarmed to read that Eva "fornicated across Cucking Green last night"; in East Sussex it means nothing more venal than that she took a quiet stroll!

— JOHN DURRANT

The Evening Rise. H. M. Bateman. *Duckworth*, 15/-

The author, whose name will be not unfamiliar to *Punch* readers, has been fishing with genial undogmatic passion for fifty years. He likes the West Country streams best—Dartmoor, the Exe, the Windrush, the Coln at Bibury—but is not exclusive or an out-and-out purist. He has presented his flies, wet or dry, to trout in Scotland and Ireland, Brittany, the Black Forest and the Pyrenees, at Taupo in New Zealand and in the Canadian Rockies. It sounds an enviable life, and in this book Mr. Bateman communicates some of the pleasure fishing has given him, talks

of fishing friends and inns, remembers good days and not so good, and resolutely declines to lay down the law. Some of the incidental "stories" are a little mild, but anglers will enjoy these gentle reminiscences and the characteristic drawings that accompany them.

— H. F. ELLIS

CREDIT BALANCE

The Nylon Pirates. Nicholas Monsarrat. *Cassell*, 18/-. Gang of blackmailers operate on millionaire cruise from New York to South America and South Africa. Difficult passengers, serene Captain, stresses within gang and lots of sex. Smooth, efficient entertainment which may remind older readers of Gilbert Frankau, an *uninhabited* Gilbert Frankau. Expert showmanship makes it seem fresher than it is; but if this can be published surely anything can.

The International Who's Who. *Europa Publications*, 130/-. All the world's notables, from Aalto to Zwyrykin, from Abbots to Zoologists, from Abyssinia to Zululand, with the twenty-five reigning royal families handily digested at the beginning.

Winnie Ille Pu. Alexander Lenard. *Methuen*, 12/6. A real don's delight. Milne's great work done into Latin as Ciceronian as the original allows. "Buzz, buzz, buzz, I wonder why it does" goes "Burr, burr, burr, Quid est causae cur?"

CHRISTMAS COMES, BUT . . .

CHILDREN are easy, grown-ups less so. You can hardly send old Bertie a box of disguises, Aunt Julia a sleeping-eye doll. Tropical fish? A cactus? Almost everything else has been done. So why send them anything this year? Instead, send us their name and address, and we will send *PUNCH*. Fifty-two brightened Wednesdays, and one positively glittering Monday (when the Almanack comes out). We also send greetings, bearing your name, enabling them to bless it. Subscriptions: Great Britain and Eire £2 16s.; Canada (By Canadian Magazine Post) £2 10s. 87.25); Elsewhere Overseas £3 (U.S.A. \$9.00). Write to: Department ED., *PUNCH*, 10 Bouvier Street, London, E.C.4. U.S.A. and Canadian readers may remit by cheques on their own banks. Other overseas readers should consult their bankers or remit by postal money order.

MY NAME..... MR. MRS. MISS
(BLOCK LETTERS)

ADDRESS.....

I enclose remittance for.....

Please send *PUNCH* throughout 1961 to the name(s) and address(es) as detailed on attached sheet of paper, preceded by a Greetings Card on my behalf to arrive at Christmas. (The service can be started earlier if desired.)

FOR WOMEN



Grandmamas

"YOU a granny! I'd never have believed it!" said Daphne.
"After a night's baby-sitting I both feel and look a granny," Jane replied.
"After a *nuit blanche* . . . quite, quite *blanche*. And oh how I long for sleeping pills."

Daphne smiled sympathetically.
"You'll find you grow stronger in time. With three grandchildren I should know. Grandmothers must, above all things, keep fit."

"Fit." A tear ran down Jane's cheek. She wiped it away with a bit of lace, smiling ruefully. "How do you manage on your baby-sitting days with three under five and no nannie? Tell me. Pray tell me."

Daphne put a cigarette into a long holder, took out a small enamelled lighter and smoking with great elegance replied "I drink Guinness."

"Guinness?"

"Yes, Guinness—a tonic, you know. I advise you to do the same."

Jane nodded her head thoughtfully. "You've heard about George?" she said at last.

Daphne laughed gaily. "George! A grandfather! Yes, I heard. It seems funny when you remember him in a punt up at Oxford . . ."

"Funny? The reverse, surely . . . But he has failed his daughter. He has failed her absolutely."

"George? Failed? Could George fail?"

"He took to Gripe Water while on duty: said he had indigestion. His daughter came home, found the bottle empty and the baby roaring with wind."

"Shameful," Daphne agreed. She blew a smoke ring and added "I met Mary the other day. A real middle-aged

spread, poor darling. And as a grandparent Mary is *not* a success."

"Yet at school she was a prefect! She was even head girl! The only thing she ever failed in was her figure."

"Too true. But . . . plus *ça change* plus *c'est la même chose* and she took to rusk. She couldn't resist them. She would empty several packets in an afternoon."

"Lamentable. Quite, quite lamentable." Jane laughed weakly. "Utterly and entirely lamentable." She arranged the cushions comfortably and put her feet on the arm of a chair. "Forgive my feet: I must rest them. I'm on duty to-morrow and will need all the strength I can muster."

Daphne raised her delicately marked eyebrows. "But resting won't help you. It's exercise that you need. You must walk . . . or better still . . . run twice round the park daily. Muscle is the important thing for grannies."

Jane reached for the decanter and poured out two glasses of sherry. "Kate has taken a different line . . . a *strong* line," she remarked.

"Ah! So Kate's a grandmother too?"

"On paper, yes. But she said the baby interfered with her bridge. She'll have none of it. Inhuman it seems to me."

"Like Isabel who's quite ashamed of being a grandparent. She changes the subject whenever it's mentioned. She has dyed her hair and taken a villa on the Riviera."

"She would! Not like poor Madge who dotes on that plain pudding of a grandchild of hers. Madge, I fear, has become a bore . . . a crashing bore. Twelve pounds at birth though. Fantastic!"

"Yet it's Madge who is in hospital."

Jane sat upright and the cushions fell to the floor. "Madge in hospital?" "Run over by a pram," Daphne replied.

"By a pram?"

Daphne spoke slowly and with relish. "It happened like this. Madge, while on duty, was easing the pram down the steps of her own front door. Her muscles were not equal to the strain and the pram, in fact, took charge. The porter found Madge pinned beneath it."

"And the child?" Jane whispered.

"Gurgling with delight," said Daphne, "and with good reason: that baby had had a very narrow squeak."

"The poor sweet."

"To cut a short story short," Daphne continued, "and to prevent the pram hurtling into the Knightsbridge traffic, Madge wedged her leg in the wheel and the leg . . . her right one . . . snapped like a cheese straw."

"I say, what pluck!"

"A grandmother worthy of the name could hardly have done otherwise," Daphne objected.

"I suppose not," Jane agreed quickly.

Daphne sipped her sherry. "She will be laid up for at least two months in plaster. An' well! Our bones grow brittle. We're none of us as young as we used to be."

"Poor, poor Madge," Jane sighed. "And such a tiny, frail creature too. I'm sorry. Very, very sorry. Madge has all my sympathy."

"There's no need for sympathy darling. She's enjoying herself thoroughly."

"Enjoying herself?"

"The first good rest she's had for years!"

— M. S.

Books Against the Wall

IN case you think that here in America we have gone about as far as we can go in the matter of doing away with books, just wait. The worst is yet to be.

Books have been digested and redigested and now, so help me Gutenberg, they are disappearing right into the wall.

A recent newspaper article claims that one can now "enjoy the decorative effect of rich-looking books by using a panel of specially designed wallpaper."

There are one or two bonuses along with the rich-looking book effect. You get

"wall interest and a strong vertical accent."

I haven't been so upset since the cranberry scare. Here I am, with several long squat bookcases that are giving me a strong horizontal accent, when what I apparently need is a strong vertical one.

Well, one must try to keep up with the times, so I suppose I'll have to get rid of the books and bookcases and shop around for a little wall interest. I wonder if I might be able to find a yard or so of Shakespeare and the romantic poets and a few feet of Dickens and Thackeray. I certainly wouldn't want to settle for best-seller paper and then find that the Joneses have the Greek and Roman poets on theirs.

Being sentimental about books, I'll need a good thought to hold while making the change-over. I'll concentrate on an important advantage of a wallpaper library that the article overlooked. No one could borrow a book and forget to return it, or bring it back looking like something that had been dug up with the Dead Sea scrolls.

I'll try to remember, too, that wallpaper panels eliminate "the expense and maintenance" of books. I haven't done much about maintaining mine, and am not even certain whether this would involve furnishing plastic jackets all around or numbering them according to the Dewey decimal system. But wallpaper books will free me from maintenance worries, whatever they are.

Still, in spite of all the arguments, I am not convinced. I want my books, and hang the expense and the maintenance.

Just the same, I'm glad I saw the article, because it opens up such an interesting vista. It may be that other things are available in wallpaper now, and I intend to find out what they are. I have always wanted a grand piano. I can't squeeze a grand into a spinet-size house, but what's to stop me from having a wallpaper one?

I can picture my freshly-papered home now—wallpaper piano, a couple of wallpaper Monets, a nice collection of wallpaper Wedgwood, a wallpaper marble-topped cocktail table . . .

No, the last item won't do. You know how people are. All that broken glass.

— WANDA BURGAN



"Girl wtd., share flat. Own doom.
FRE 6422."

Evening Standard advertisement
Fair enough.

For Goodness' Sake

THIS is the month when charity suffereth long,
This is the time for the Great White Elephant Stall,
For the home-made jam on acres of trestle table,
For the doily, the painted tray, the crochet shawl.

For the Christmas cards designed by someone's nephew,
For hangers covered in crêpe by someone's aunt,
For the ripening pheasant lying among the apples,
The beads, the dusters and the potted plant.

This is the month of desperate disbursement,
The hour of the amateur tycoon;
This is the day we send a cake in the morning
And buy it back again in the afternoon.

Look at us, please! Mark how we do here stand
Laden with aprons, ash-trays, fruit and flowers:
For we have come to your bazaar, my friends,
So to ensure that you will come to ours.

Oh, that we could agree to banish ever
The raffia bags, the bath salts and the soaps,
To sit, far far away from the pickled peaches,
Sending each other cheques in envelopes.

— VIRGINIA GRAHAM



"I've tried mental cruelty but he seems to like it."

Toby Competitions

No. 140—Keep it Clean

PROVIDE a passage of English (prose or verse) entirely in respectable four-lettered words. Most forms of cheating ("Don't," "NATO," etc.) will be permitted. Limit 100 words.

A framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. **Entries by Wednesday, November 23.** Address to TOBY COMPETITION No. 140, *Punch*, 10 Bouvierie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 137 (Remember, Remember)

The request was for an historical occurrence with its annual celebration on Bonfire Night pattern. Some of the history was treated with rather relentless humour but the competitors' main difficulty seemed to be in the invention of acceptable rites. The winner was

T. J. C. DENNIS
17 INVERLEITH PLACE
EDINBURGH 3

Progress Day, July 26

This day is a public holiday in England. It commemorates Queen Elizabeth I's hundredth Royal Progress on which she slept in no fewer than fifty beds belonging to other people. The day is celebrated still by most of the populace. Groups of relations and friends move from house to house spending some time in bed at each during the whole of the 24 hours. Hospitality is lavishly provided and all meals are taken in bed. All try to spend a little time in fifty beds. In rural districts the old-time horseriding progress is retained but in the cities this has given place to autodaces and even private coach parties, dressed in pyjamas and singing madrigals.

Following are the runners-up:

All Sneaks Day, September 19

Children, preferably dressed up in fancy uniform, will hang about the streets and report on any person playing a radio in a L.C.C. car-park, dropping a piece of paper, giving driving lessons in a royal park, parking in an unauthorized place, or too

long, etc. This commemorates the day when a body of men, having no responsibility for protecting life or property, nor for maintaining the peace, appeared for the first time in history on the streets of Britain, clothed at the public expense and paid solely to report otherwise law-abiding citizens for infringing minor regulations.

E. M. Wagner, 5 Ferncroft Avenue, London, N.W.3

The Day Someone Raised His Voice in the Pavilion at Lord's. The annual celebration takes the form of jumping in the direction of the ceiling, preferably in groups of eleven.

Roger Till, 14 Western Hill, Durham

On February 22, 1961, a satellite in orbit developed severe multi-frequency oscillatory defects of a transmitted type. While passing over this country on its fast-failing course it completely disrupted all television, radio and other communications. The result was a revival of the arts of writing, reading and conversation. The communal, mental and general health benefits derived were so beneficial that the event is celebrated annually on that date by a complete abstinence from the mass media.

P. M. Thorp, Brunel College of Technology, Acton, W.3

Toffee-Apple Day

When Cromwell removed the Bauble in 1653 everyone rejoiced and Ebenezer Comfort-Me-With-Apples Adamson sold large quantities of apples on sticks as a symbol of the Mace. The apples shrivelled as it was April and Lord Beaverbrook had not yet discovered Commonwealth trading, so they were covered with toffee to make them more attractive. Toffee-Apple Day has since been celebrated annually to mark the English dislike of despotic authority. Crude heads of statesmen have often been carved on the apples.

Miss Vera Telfer, 27 Lauderdale Mansions, Maida Vale, London, W.9

On a day when King Canute was voyaging in the shire of Dorset, disguised, he happened, alone upon a shore, to come on an old woman who begged him to mind the sea lest it catch fire. So great, however, was the stench and pollution of the beach in those days that the King was overwhelmed and while he lay unaware the ocean did indeed burn, and such was the heat that no pilchard remained unscorched from Mevagissey to Clacton-upon-Sea. The old dame returning did soundly chastise His Majesty. Ever since then, upon the Sixth Day of October, the rude villeins of Dorset, being gathered at the shore, do light a great fire and, the young wives, having beaten their lords most heartily, they set to consuming much ale and stuffed roast turnips.

G. Laszlo, "Bron Rhiw," Bangor, Carnarvonshire



"But that's not L shaped—that's J shaped."

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